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# The Role of Battle Narrative in the *Bellum Gallicum*

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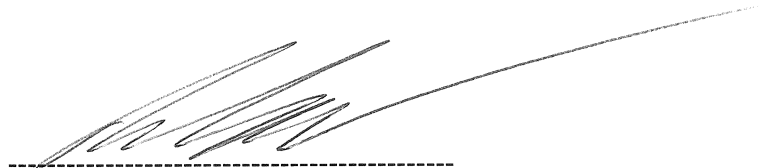
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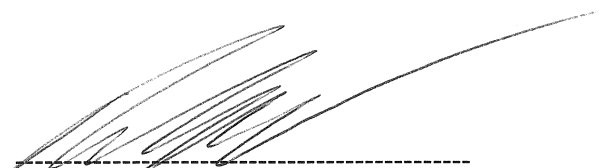
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## **Abstract of the Dissertation**

# **The Role of Battle Narrative in the *Bellum Gallicum***

By David Jonathon Nolan

Supervisor Dr. Geoffrey Adams

This thesis examines the role of battle narrative in the *Bellum Gallicum*, to show that these passages, including contextual information, are fundamentally persuasive in nature as they are integrated into Caesar's various self-promotional aims. To date a comprehensive analysis has not been undertaken of battle, and where it has been examined by military historians, investigations have often relied on the idea that these passages are primarily designed to reconstruct the details of the historical event. The thesis instead uses case studies to show these passages are not merely an attempt to describe historical events, but are fundamentally influenced by the desire to influence the audience. This can be a simple matter of reception, whether through the building of tension in the narrative, or the creation of a compelling account of a particular battle. More often however battle is used in conjunction with the campaign narrative to create an impression, or support an argument regarding Caesar's interpretation of the episode, as battles are part of the interpretive structure of the text, where information conveys his self-promotional objectives. Furthermore, a major objective of these accounts is to support Caesar's view of the various characters portrayed, and the narrative is used to create or encourage views of the individuals and peoples involved. Unsurprisingly, the most important figure represented in battle is Caesar, and self-aggrandisement or the deflection of criticism shapes the structure and content of these narratives at a fundamental level. A detailed analysis of these passages, and their relationship to the book in which they appear shows how Caesar structures battle narrative for self-promotion in various ways. Not only does such an examination reflect on the way that battle and other military information is presented, but it enables insight into the purposes that he had while writing these passages, and the extent to which he was willing to utilise battle narrative in the pursuit of the self-promotional objectives of the work.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my colleagues and friends without whom this thesis would not have been possible. In particular, thanks are owed to my undergraduate teachers, who instilled an interest in the classics and a desire to study further. I would also like to thank my honours supervisors, Assoc. Prof Peter Davis, Dr Jessica Dietrich and Dr Paul Burton, who gave me an appreciation for the myriad opportunities that classics offer for further research, particularly with regard to the interpretation and understanding of martial elements in Roman literature. Particular thanks go to my postgraduate supervisors Dr Geoffrey Adams and Dr Graeme Miles, who have endured with good grace the process of reading and providing feedback, in the case of Dr Adams, through multiple iterations of this thesis. I would particularly like to acknowledge the ASCS community, in particular the fine group of military historians it has been my pleasure to meet and converse with. Furthermore I would like to thank my brother Dr Stephen Nolan for his input, and more importantly his feedback during the final run of proof reading. Most importantly, I owe all this to my partner Shayne Davies. Her support kept me on track, and this thesis is a direct result of her encouragement and enthusiasm.

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## INTRODUCTION

The intention of this thesis is to demonstrate the role that battle plays in the *Bellum Gallicum*, in particular that the details of battle narrative are consistently used persuasively throughout the work. Such an investigation addresses an element missing in existing analyses of the military aspects of the work; as military scholarship has sometimes underestimated the effect of Caesar's various self-promotional objectives on the narration of combat and its campaign context. This thesis illustrates that battle narratives, and content relevant to an understanding of military affairs such as numeric and other contextual information, are utilised for much more than a reconstruction of historical events and are fundamentally persuasive in nature. As this study illustrates, these passages have implicit messages or arguments embedded in their structure and content, often closely related to the relevant campaign or book, and are designed to convey very specific information about Caesar, his enemies and the campaigns in Gaul.

It may seem self-evident that Caesar would have developed his battle narratives as part of his promotional arsenal; however military enquiry has often taken the battle narratives as only superficially influenced by persuasive motives. John Keegan states the problem clearly:

We now know that Caesar composed his commentaries for a carefully calculated political end. And intelligent readers, whether so aware or not, have probably always guessed that he overdid the descriptions of his own exploits. Yet surprisingly and exceptionally, military historians have never seriously questioned the realism of his battle-scenes, viewed as reportage, have indeed generally used his depiction of how his legionaries fought as a truth to which they adapt whatever facts they could glean of the battles of their own times.<sup>1</sup>

Keegan identified this issue in 1976, however his concern appears to have been overlooked by some military historians, who continue to analyse battle in the *Bellum*

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<sup>1</sup> Keegan (1976) p. 64.

*Gallicum* based on the idea that it is primarily reconstructive.<sup>2</sup> This thesis addresses the problem of using battle as it is written, by illustrating that the creation of the narrative is not simply based on clarification of source events.<sup>3</sup> The thesis illustrates that battle has an important role in promoting Caesar, not just as a record of his victories, but through the persuasive use of content. An example is the presentation of events in battle and characters that support his interpretation of each episode, and most importantly, support the favourable representation of himself. As this thesis illustrates Caesar uses the medium of battle narrative to promote himself throughout the *Bellum Gallicum* far more extensively than is often credited in analysis of the military dimension of the work.

This use of battle is illustrated in the description of the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri in Book Four. Caesar reduces the account down to those elements essential to capture the basic sequence of events and the success of the encounter, so that the battle itself is described in less than two chapters. He only gives a basic array of battle, and a very brief account of what must have been a horrific sight, as the Romans cut down fleeing women and children, massacring two entire tribes in the ensuing rout.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the selection of content, in particular the blunt description of the slaughter of fleeing non-combatants, supports his justification for the massacre. This is apparent as he contextualises the slaughter of women and young boys as the elimination of a threat to Gaul, and supports his argument with the description of the Roman soldiers who are enraged by the enemy's supposed duplicity. The result is that the battle narrative supports an overall argument that the Usipetes and Tencteri are a threat that simply had to be destroyed.<sup>5</sup> The battle and the campaign that precede it have the same fundamental purpose in establishing the necessity of Caesar's actions, something he is able to communicate in a very short account of combat. This approach is evident throughout the *Bellum Gallicum*, and a detailed examination reveals that battle is most often constructed with an embedded message that can be

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<sup>2</sup> See pp. 22-25 below.

<sup>3</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 275 states that battle descriptions have very rarely been studied as a group within the work of an author or as a group compared to other authors, suggesting the need for more examination of battle narrative and its place in the text. Kagan (2006) has addressed the major battle narratives of the *Bellum Gallicum*, and this study implicitly responds to Kagan's approach and the idea that the *Bellum Gallicum* battle narratives are primarily attempting to explain the source events.

<sup>4</sup> *Bellum Gallicum* 4.14-4.15.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 297-319 below where the perfidy of the enemy, the threat they pose to Gaul, and fear of returning cavalry are all provided as justification for the massacre.



determined by looking at structure and content of the battle within the associated campaign.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

This introduction to the thesis discusses the methodology by which battle narratives are examined, and addresses the relationship of Caesar's battles to historiography on battle. The literary study is, due to the extent of the scholarship on the *Bellum Gallicum*, very specific, and largely confined to works that address battle narrative and military matters. The body of the thesis shows that Caesar creates persuasive narratives using military content, whether this relates to the representation of the enemy, subordinates, or Caesar himself. Each chapter of the thesis provides case studies that include all the major narratives and most of the minor accounts. As the studies illustrate, the objective of battle narrative is fundamentally persuasive, and the content of each narrative appears to be determined by how Caesar wishes each passage to be interpreted.

This thesis shows that there is a need to recognise the significant difference between a report or dispatch and Caesar's battle narratives. Specifically, Chapter One examines reconstructive elements of battle, to demonstrate that information is not solely determined by the need for clarity regarding the historical events. Caesar often simplifies or omits the complexities of battle, including contextual information, suggesting he is not limited by a need to communicate a full account of combat or its context. As the defence of the Rhone in Book One illustrates, even military details such as the scale, scope and numbers involved in a battle are not necessarily the criteria by which Caesar selects his content.<sup>6</sup>

The remainder of Chapter One gives examples of how Caesar creates a narrative of battle that is structured to address reception rather than to clarify the original event. While Caesar is often our only record of the events described, it is nevertheless possible to see the author developing his narrative even at the expense of coherency regarding the course of the historical battle. For example, there is a concern with audience reception evident in the Helvetian campaign, in which Caesar varies his

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<sup>6</sup> 1.8.

level of authorial knowledge to capture the dangers and uncertainty of fighting this new enemy.<sup>7</sup> A similar objective is evident in the Sabis River narrative, where contextual information is used to build tension in the passage.<sup>8</sup> The divergence of Caesar's battles from a simple dispatch or reconstructive commentary is particularly evident the account of the Belgic confederation in Book Two. There he does much more than simply report the enemy numbers and constructs his narrative in order to develop the topos of the Gallic multitude, a powerful theme that determines the content of the passage.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the manner in which Caesar digresses from simply reporting events is apparent in the battle of Octodurus, a battle where he is not present as character.<sup>10</sup> Free from the need to directly self-aggrandise his personal role, he frames the account in terms of the perception of the protagonists, presenting information to vividly illustrate their thoughts, reactions and frustrations. The creation of a narrative designed to capture the impressions of the protagonists determines the type of content, and the level of detail provided, demonstrating that Caesar's battles are much more developed than just a report of historical events, as they place style and reception prominently in the choice of content and nature of the narrative.

While Chapter One illustrates the manner in which Caesar develops a narrative of battle for reception, Chapter Two shows that battle is used to persuasive effect regarding the episodes described. Content can support a stated interpretation of an episode, as is the case in the destruction of the Tigurini, where it is clearly stated that the battle is the implementation of vengeance for past wrongs.<sup>11</sup> Caesar also utilises battle in a more subtle manner, such as in the account of Gergovia, where *exempla* and other combat anecdotes are included specifically to support his stated interpretation that the soldiers were at fault for the defeat.<sup>12</sup> This implicit use of military information to create a message is an important aspect of battle narrative. For example a study of the second invasion of Britain shows that contextual information such as numbers and tribal details are used to argue the level of threat that the enemy posed, and later to support the idea that the campaign was resolved successfully. Another important aspect of Caesar's technique is the use of battle to support and

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<sup>7</sup> 1.11-1.29.

<sup>8</sup> 2.15-2.29.

<sup>9</sup> 2.1-2.12.

<sup>10</sup> 3.1-3.6

<sup>11</sup> 1.12.

<sup>12</sup> 7.36-7.52.

resolve issues raised in each campaign narrative. In the Venetii account the medium of battle is used to address the issues he describes that he faced in prosecuting the historical campaign.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani in Book One is examined for its relationship to the proposition, raised in the preceding chapters, that the Germanic reputation for war was unfounded, and that the claims of the enemy leader were empty boasts.<sup>14</sup> While the methods vary, it is apparent that the role of battle in these accounts is to persuade the audience to accept Caesar's interpretation of the content through the choice of information and the manner of presentation.

Chapter Three shows that battle serves a persuasive role in the depiction of the participants, beyond that of a simple description of battlefield protagonists. Caesar uses the details of battle to create impressions and to interpret the behaviour of groups for his audience. An account can simply assign characteristics, as is the case in the Bibracte narrative, which is designed to define Gallic character and the manner of warfare against the Gauls.<sup>15</sup> It can also be used to assign negative characteristics such as barbarism, or the arrogance and perfidy of the enemy. This is evident in the siege of Aduatuca, where Caesar uses topography to capture the arrogance of the enemy, and also in the topos of the Belgic multitude, which is used to capture its martial inadequacies and opposition to order.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, the details of battle can be used to create a worthy enemy, as is the case with the Nervii in the Sabis River narrative. The Nervii are ascribed with *virtus*, a quality that is only indirectly evident in combat, but that creates a foe worthy of the commander.<sup>17</sup> Individual participants are also subject to interpretation through battle, and this chapter examines some of Caesar's subordinates to illustrate that battle is used to define and encourage an interpretation of their behaviour. This is most evident in the representation of the defeated commander Titurius Sabinus, around whom the battle narrative is structured so that his behaviour is vilified and his agency in the defeat communicated.<sup>18</sup> Battle is a

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<sup>13</sup> 3.7-3.16.

<sup>14</sup> 1.31-53.

<sup>15</sup> 1.23-1.26.

<sup>16</sup> 2.29-2.33, 2.1-2.12.

<sup>17</sup> 2.15-2.28.

<sup>18</sup> For the subordinates see 3.20-3.22, 5.57-5.58, 6.7-6.8, 5.26-5.37. The representation of enemy leaders is examined where it affects the construction of a battle narrative. The most notable examples are Ariovistus at 1.31-53, and Vercingetorix in Book Seven. These are addressed at pp. 146-161 and pp. 260-276.

critical component in creating characters that support Caesar's interpretation of the text, and information is selected in order to persuade the audience as to how these characters should be understood.

Chapter Four demonstrates that the narrative of battle serves to generate a positive portrayal of Caesar, and case studies show how fundamentally his self-representation determines structure and content. Battle is part of an overall scheme of self-promotion evident in the third person style of narration and the favourable representation of the commander through combat.<sup>19</sup> However it is used to promote Caesar in other ways, through the portrayal of his character, which is sometimes placed at a point of thematic resolution, so that his own contribution is consistent with the general message of the battle.<sup>20</sup> The use of Caesar's physical presence is most evident in the battle of the Sabis River, where the account is constructed to draw attention to the impact of his arrival, and to place him at a literary crisis point.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, battle narrative is used to make the most of his instrumentality, such as in the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp, where the passage creates a stalemate that maximises the impact of his arrival.<sup>22</sup> The person of Caesar is therefore a critical element addressed in the construction of battle, and the narrative is constructed with the specific purpose of communicating his importance.

While Caesar's person is important, Chapter Four also illustrates that battle plays a critical role in capturing his command qualities. Battle narrative can be used to show an aspect of his character, as is evident in the siege of Aduatuca where he describes events in terms of his own *clementia*.<sup>23</sup> In the account of the first invasion of Britain Caesar draws attention to his role as commander of this unprecedented deed, and the battle narrative is constructed to address how he overcomes the obstacles in the way of Roman victory.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, in Book Seven, Caesar portrays an ongoing contrast of behaviour between himself and the Gallic leader Vercingetorix that influences the details of the siege of Alesia.<sup>25</sup> Throughout the book, the pairing of the two is

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<sup>19</sup> See Welch (1998) p. 85.

<sup>20</sup> See 1.52, 3.14.

<sup>21</sup> See specifically 2.25.

<sup>22</sup> 5.38-5.51.

<sup>23</sup> 2.29-2.33.

<sup>24</sup> 4.20-4.26.

<sup>25</sup> See specifically 7.69-89.

designed to show his superiority to his Gallic opposite, a representation that culminates in Caesar's intervention at the crisis of the battle. These narratives are fundamentally influenced by the role set for himself as commander and participant in the *Bellum Gallicum*, thereby demonstrating their part in supporting the self-promotional objective of the work.

Chapter Five illustrates that battle narrative serves a supportive role in protecting Caesar from potential criticism. This is most evident in confrontations during the first invasion of Britain, where the narrative establishes his prudence in retiring from the island in the face of the unique and difficult circumstances encountered.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the reporting of the massacre at Avaricum in Book Seven uses implicit arguments to justify the treatment of this city, and the slaughter of the Usipetes and Tencteri in Book Four appears to address criticism he received at Rome by emphasising the sheer necessity of eliminating these tribes.<sup>27</sup> The importance of explaining Caesar's conduct is also an ongoing feature of Book Five, and he utilises the second invasion of Britain to address the problematic circumstances of the first expedition.<sup>28</sup> This account is also constructed to exonerate him from blame for the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta that occurs in the same book. The extent to which the massacre has affected the narrative is evident in the attention to affairs in Gaul during the preparations, and Caesar's general care as commander. Furthermore, the effect of the massacre is also evident in the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp, where specific contrasts in behaviour are drawn in order to establish that the behaviour of the defeated commanders was entirely unsanctioned.<sup>29</sup> The interrelationship of these episodes supports the case studies of each chapter that show how battle is fundamentally constructed to create or support the impressions of Caesar's choosing.

## Methodology

This thesis is a study of battle narrative and its place in the text of the *Bellum Gallicum*, in particular the role that such content plays in self-promotion over any

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<sup>26</sup> 4.27-4.37.

<sup>27</sup> 7.17-7.28, 4.1-4.15.

<sup>28</sup> 5.1-5.23.

<sup>29</sup> 5.38-5.51.

reconstructive historical framework. The study is particularly concerned with a trend among some military historians to take the battles as being primarily driven by the desire to reconstruct the course of events and the result.<sup>30</sup> Caesar's battles are far from what Barthes calls the "vacuousness" of a simple series of events, and there is almost always a deeper meaning behind the content and its presentation.<sup>31</sup> The thesis therefore examines the place of battle within the campaign narrative, or addresses the immediate aims of the text, with case studies utilised to show direct correlation between the content of battle, the campaign description and general self-promotional objectives.

Caesar was under no compulsion to comprehensively report the course and result of the historical battles described in the text, and in the absence of supporting evidence from outside the work, the text itself is the best source for why the battles appear as they do.<sup>32</sup> This thesis makes particular use of any judgement statements made by Caesar, such as praise of the enemy in the Sabis River narrative, the blame attached to Sabinus for a massacre in Book Five, or the stated reason for the defeat at Gergovia.<sup>33</sup> Other narrative clues are also utilised to determine the objective of a particular passage, such as combat vignettes, the placement of Caesar on the battlefield, or catalogues and speeches.<sup>34</sup> Caesar's own introduction is the key to his style, in which

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<sup>30</sup> See pp. 22-25 below. While Caesar does provide reasons for victory, elements of battle support the role of the passage in the text, which is not necessarily concerned with the victory or a comprehensive reconstruction of the historical event.

<sup>31</sup> See Barthes (1970) p. 153.

<sup>32</sup> The text of the *Bellum Gallicum* poses few problems, which are addressed as required. However as Edwards (1917) p. xvii notes, the text as a whole does not present any major manuscript issues. This thesis follows the text adopted by Edwards, unless otherwise noted, which is based on the MSS group A, B, M and R edited by Nipperdey and R. du Pontet, and includes some corrections by T. Rice Holmes. The study also uses the texts available on Diogenes, from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* and the Packard Humanities Institute, with notes on any inconsistencies where required, however there are no major issues in terms of the scope of this study. Any translations are the author's own. Note that the issue of interpolation does not generally affect this study, as two of the major episodes in regards to the topic are the customs of the Germani, 6.25-6.28, and the description of Britain at 5.12-5.14, both of which are not in themselves battle narratives. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 1, 11, 133, 196. Riggsby provides an overview of other sources of self-representation in war, none of which have the detail of Caesar. See Riggsby (2006) p. 202 for a summary of the paucity of evidence. As Riggsby (2006) p. 1 notes there is more evidence for the text than the wars themselves.

<sup>33</sup> See 2.27.3-2.27.5 for the Sabis River narrative. See 5.52.6 for the massacre. See 7.52.1-7.52.4 for Gergovia. Note that sieges are included in this analysis as they often serve similar objectives to field battles, skirmishes or other confrontations.

<sup>34</sup> The focus on implicit arguments is largely due to the general lack of non-narrative comments by Caesar, as Riggsby (2006) p. 7 notes. See Kraus (2010) p. 48. Kraus notes that the ethnographic passage of Book Six and the description of Gallic bravery are denoted by "flags" such as Caesar's use of the first person. Rasmussen (1963) pp. 21-27 shows that all 17 occurrences of direct speech in the commentaries serve sound literary purposes. See Mannetter (1995) pp. 138-175 on catalogues.

no overt purpose is stated for the work; rather implicit arguments are implanted in the narrative itself.<sup>35</sup> As with the introduction, Caesar's self-promotion is often implicit and embedded in the content of battle. In these cases the text is the best source for Caesar's persuasive aims and techniques.

This is primarily an analysis of military information, and the investigation focuses on the representation of combat and related military data. This involves an examination of the criteria by which Caesar selects the information, and his methods of conveying such data. From a military perspective disjunctive aspects are examined, such as the disappearance of units from the account, the selective record of contextual details and attention to particular sections of combat.<sup>36</sup> Of equal importance is an examination of the contextual information necessary for a full understanding of battle, such as numeric factors, fighting techniques, topographical data and the delegation of command, which are often included outside of the battle narrative.<sup>37</sup> The relationship between battle and the campaign narrative is critical, as the interdependence of the two means that battle often serves a complementary purpose in supporting the aims of the overall episode.

The approach to understanding the role of these passages is to make comprehensive use of case studies. Military analysis tends to examine battle narratives as self-contained reconstructive entities, so the thesis uses a similar approach to establish the persuasive objectives that form the foundation of each account. This is important as some passages, particularly the shorter accounts, have not been given much attention by military scholars, so these accounts have been included in this study in order to fully recognise the role of battle.<sup>38</sup> These shorter battle narratives can be as important as the longer accounts, as they often achieve their objective in a much clearer manner and with less extraneous detail. It should also be noted that there is considerable linkage between chapters, as the battle narratives often contain multiple methods of self-promotion. This means that some passages, such as the Sabis River account, are

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<sup>35</sup> See p. 41 below on the introduction to the work.

<sup>36</sup> See pp. 40-59 below for the issues.

<sup>37</sup> Kraus (2010) pp. 41-42 notes the general divisions of the work into episodes. This thesis associates information generally by campaign, noting that Caesar may describe activity in several locations in the one campaign.

<sup>38</sup> For example, see pp. 113-116 on the defeat of the Tigurini, in which a short account is followed by the context in which Caesar interprets the encounter.

addressed in more than one chapter.<sup>39</sup> It is not possible in this thesis to address every aim, nor to analyse in detail every objective, nonetheless the analysis is comprehensive enough in its illustration of the various self-promotional roles of battle narrative throughout the work.<sup>40</sup>

This study also follows the work of post-Ramnaud scholarship that understands the text to be essentially self-promotional in nature, but with this self-promotion evident in various ways.<sup>41</sup> Ramnaud's seminal work addresses the extent to which the work as a whole is a form of propaganda and the misrepresentation of events.<sup>42</sup> This study agrees with Ramnaud only in so far as Caesar's task appears to take over the understanding of events as they appear in the text, and does not presume that the objective is always to misinform. Instead, instances where the representation is problematic in terms of reconstruction are noted, as narrative selectivity and omissions are often the key to understanding the use of battle. This is a textual analysis, and while it has implications for the historical context, it is directed at establishing the role of battle narrative within the work.

In particular, the study draws on the work of Kraus, who analyses the use of individual elements of battle in accounts such as the Gergovia narrative.<sup>43</sup> As Kraus states:

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<sup>39</sup> As one of the longest battle narratives of the *Bellum Gallicum*, the battle of the Sabis River in Book Two is not addressed in a single examination, as it encompasses several authorial objectives. See pp. 66-71, 192-204, 222-238 below.

<sup>40</sup> The major narrative that does not receive full attention is the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp at 6.36-6.41 which has been noted at pp. 164-165 below. This requires separate examination due to the unusual nature of Book Six, as it includes an extended section on the customs of the Gauls. It is intended that this be the subject of a further study.

<sup>41</sup> Kraus (2009) pp. 102, 165. This study follows Kraus in that it regards the narrative technique as not essentially designed to "tendentiously" deform the underlying events. Kraus (2005a) p. 103 notes how Ramnaud's approach, based on the idea of propaganda, has been refined, however the essential issue of veracity vs. propaganda is still major influence on scholarship. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 190, 207-214 on the idea of propaganda as having fallen into disfavour. Wells (2001) at p. 115 states that it is generally agreed that the purpose of the commentaries is to inform elites at home of Caesar's accomplishments, and to facilitate his accession to greater power.

<sup>42</sup> Ramnaud (1966) p. 111 states *Ces disjonctions des faits et des liens logiques révèlent l'attitude intellectuelle de César. En écrivant les Commentaires, il a voulu prendre en main la compréhension de ses lecteurs et, à ce que les modernes appellent synthèse historique opposer l'escamotage historique*. Kraus (2009) p. 165 notes the essential lack of a systemised alteration of events in the *Bellum Gallicum*.

<sup>43</sup> See Kraus (2010).



Caesar's decision to reduce the potentially infinite confusion and multiplied engagements of war to a few highlighted episodes harnesses a pre-existing grammar of military narrative to create a coherent, plausible literary representation of experience.<sup>44</sup>

As these are literary representations of combat, this thesis adopts many of the observations of Kraus and scholars such as Brown, who address objectives implicit in the choice of content and structure.<sup>45</sup> Narratological studies such as those of Kraus have been considered with the knowledge that the text is based on historical events such as manoeuvre, combat and a result that are derived from the original event.<sup>46</sup> While battle narrative also conforms to "dramatic unities" such as time, place and action, the study is primarily concerned with the use of military information in battle narrative, and therefore only refers to narratological studies when they impact on this data.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore Latin passages are cited as part of the case studies, and some uses of Latin are examined; however Caesar's *Latinitas* is only indirectly addressed.<sup>48</sup> Narratological studies and the examination of Latin are used when they are relevant to military information, as the level of textual analysis adopted is designed to illustrate the overall role of battle in the work.

## Caesar and Battle in Ancient History

Caesar was certainly not the only ancient writer to record a conflict, and there is a wealth of sources that include battle. While the records of *commentarii* are few, other historical sources are full of battles with various levels of detail.<sup>49</sup> Herodotus and

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<sup>44</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 165.

<sup>45</sup> Kraus (2009) pp. 173-174 notes some important sources, including some recent dissertations which have been drawn on. These are listed separately in the literature review. See Brown (1999) and (2004) who provides analysis of the Sabis River account in Book Two, and the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp in Book Five. See also Powell (1998) and Grillo (2011) who makes some relevant observations on Caesar's role as narrator in the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>46</sup> Kraus (2005b) p. 243. Kraus' narratological approach provides useful observations on the text. For example, Caesar relies on the topos of the besieged city i.e. at 7.47-7.51 and the 'topos-code' of the 'decadent Asian East'. On narratological terms and approaches see de Jong, Nünlist, Bowie, (2007a) (2007b).

<sup>47</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 173 notes this and refers to Keegan (1976) p. 16 for the three elements.

<sup>48</sup> See Cicero *Brut* 262 for praise of Caesar's style.

<sup>49</sup> On *commentarii* see Bömer (1953). See also Cicero *ad Attic* 2.1.1-2.1.2 on his own *commentarius*. Riggsby (2006) p. 146 lists those works that are known to exist.

Thucydides both claimed that war was central to their reasons for writing, and both include numerous battles in their works.<sup>50</sup> Extant Latin sources written before the *Bellum Gallicum* are rare; however it is likely that lost sources such as Cato's *Origines* included battle given the prevalence of warfare throughout the republican period.<sup>51</sup> One of Caesar's contemporaries, Sallust, also included what he believed were noteworthy battles in the war against Jugurtha.<sup>52</sup> Livy, writing in the early imperial period also includes numerous battles, for example major accounts of the battles of the Second Punic war.<sup>53</sup> Similarly Cassius Dio, Arrian, Appian and Tacitus all include battle in their works due to the environment of martial endeavour in which their works are set.<sup>54</sup> Even a biographer like Plutarch could record battle in some detail, as evidenced by his account of the battle of Marius against the Teutones and Cimbri.<sup>55</sup> Other sources such as manuals on warfare also existed, and while many of these do not survive, Frontinus provides an almost encyclopaedic list of battles and the basic principles involved, and the fragment of Arrian's array against the Alans gives a clue to the level of detail that could have been provided in other works.<sup>56</sup> The later work of Vegetius, with its recollection to the earlier periods of Roman warfare, is indicative of the pervasiveness of the martial ethos and military concepts.<sup>57</sup> This small selection of the surviving works illustrates that Caesar wrote within a long tradition of literary representations of battle, which continued to be a major feature of ancient writing after the events described in the *Bellum Gallicum*.

Caesar was also not the only eyewitness to the battles he recorded. Several of the extant sources on ancient battle were written by participants to the events they recorded and provide personal eyewitness accounts of battle, or may have come from witnesses to the confrontations described. An early participant who wrote on battle is

<sup>50</sup> See Herodotus 1.1 on conflict and for examples see Marathon 6.103-115; Thermopylae 7.206-239; Salamis 8.84-96; Plataea 9.17-89. See also Thucydides 1.1 on war, and for examples see Delium 4.93-97, Amphipolis 4.102-108, and Mantinea 5.66-5.74.

<sup>51</sup> See Grant (1970) pp. 169-170 and Krebs (2014) p. 207 on the fragmentary nature of early republican historiography.

<sup>52</sup> See Sallust *Bell Jug* 5.1-5.3 on his reasons for war being chosen as a topic. See also *Bell Cat* 1.5-1.7 for martial endeavour. See also *Bell Jug* 48-53 and *Bell Cat* 57-61 for examples of battle.

<sup>53</sup> See for example Livy 21.55.2-21.55.4 for Trebia, 22.46 for Cannae.

<sup>54</sup> See for example Dio on Actium 50.15-50.35, on the Teutoberg Forest 56.18-56.24, Arrian *Anabasis* on the Granicus 1.13-1.16; Issus 2.6-2.13; Gaugamela 3.7-3.15. See Appian *Bellum Civile* on Pharsalus 2.70-2.82 and Phillipi 4.105-4.138. See Tacitus *Annales* 14.32-14.37 on Watling St, *Agricola* 29-37 on Mons Graupius.

<sup>55</sup> Plutarch *Marius* 13-27.

<sup>56</sup> Frontinus *Strategmata*, Arrian *Ἐκταζὶς κατὰ Ἀλανῶν*.

<sup>57</sup> See Vegetius, *Epitome Rei Militaris*, and Milner (2011) pp. xxvii-xxix.

Thucydides, who not only recorded the siege of Amphipolis at which he commanded, but claims to have interviewed other participants in the Peloponnesian war, and presumably drew on their experiences for his account of battles he did not witness personally.<sup>58</sup> One of the most immediate eyewitness accounts of battle is given by Xenophon, who was present at the battle of Cunaxa described in the *Anabasis*, and who probably included information provided by other participants, such as the death of Cyrus at which he was not personally present.<sup>59</sup> Polybius also personally witnessed the fall of Carthage in 149 BCE, and may have extended his history to cover this particular battle.<sup>60</sup> Another direct record of battle comes from the period of civil war that followed the death of Caesar as Galba's letter to Cicero provides a first-hand account of the battle of Mutina.<sup>61</sup> Another notable eyewitness account appears in Ammianus Marcellinus, who recalls the siege of Amida in considerable detail.<sup>62</sup> Of course many of the surviving sources do not share this proximity to the original event. Livy in particular wrote on battles from the early history of Rome in which he was highly dependent on a variety of sources, including Polybius.<sup>63</sup> Most surviving sources for the battles of the late republican period, such as Dio, Appian and Plutarch were all reliant on other sources due to their distance from the original events.<sup>64</sup> Caesar therefore occupies a privileged place of proximity to battle, alongside other military writers who were witnesses to the battles they recorded, or who were in a position to receive first-hand accounts of the events they recorded.

Whether the narrator was close to the original events or not, writing on battle does not automatically equate to an impartial desire to reconstruct the historical events, and Caesar is not alone in utilising the martial environment of his work to address self-promotional or other objectives. In spite of a declaration of truthfulness, Thucydides not only simplifies his history, but displays his dislike for figures such as Cleon through the narrative, and even admits that his speeches may not be exact

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<sup>58</sup> See Thucydides 4.102-108 on Amphipolis. See 1.22 on his investigations.

<sup>59</sup> Xenophon *Anab* 1.8.6-1.8.11. See also Grant (1970) p. 127 on Cunaxa.

<sup>60</sup> See Polybius 3.4 on the scope of the work and 38.21.2 on the fall of Carthage. See Grant (1970) p. 148.

<sup>61</sup> Cicero *ad Fam* 30.1-3.5. Note that this is the same Servius Sulpicus Galba who served under Caesar and is described at pp. 88-111 below.

<sup>62</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus *Res Gestae* 18.8-19.8.

<sup>63</sup> See Oakley (1997) pp. 13ff on Livy's sources.

<sup>64</sup> All wrote in the 1st-3rd century AD, and were therefore none were likely to have access to persons who were first hand witnesses.

reconstructions of the original words.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Xenophon allows self-aggrandisement to determine his choice of content, particularly in the description of his own leadership qualities.<sup>66</sup> Polybius was influenced in his choice of content by his motive in writing, and includes extensive information on Roman political and military institutions to illustrate the reasons for Rome's rise to dominance.<sup>67</sup> Livy in particular allows his motive in writing to affect his battle narratives, as his focus on moral *exempla* is apparent in the story of Horatius holding the bridge.<sup>68</sup> He even includes the possibly fictitious meeting of Hannibal and Scipio Africanus before the battle of Zama, presumably in order to show contrasts of character.<sup>69</sup> Even Vegetius, writing an ostensible manual on military matters, carefully selected historical content in order to convey a political message.<sup>70</sup> Caesar therefore writes in a literary environment where there is a precedent for using the martial material, particularly historical material related to battle, for persuasive ends.

While not purporting to write history, it is likely that Caesar had access to and may have read some of these other sources, and it is even possible that some of these had influence on his style of writing. However the direct influences are not easily discernable and the text is somewhat isolated in the corpus as a result. The lack of *commentarii* to compare Caesar with is particularly problematic, as it means Caesar's use of battle cannot be compared to any obvious genre standards.<sup>71</sup> Krebs also notes that the fragmentary nature of early republican historiography is particularly problematic as it limits the sources with which to compare Caesar.<sup>72</sup> However Krebs suggests Caesar may have been familiar with and even drawn on the *Historiae* of Lucius Cornelius Sisenna, in particular noting the similar terminology for descriptions of flight.<sup>73</sup> There is also some evidence that in the *Bellum Civile* Caesar may have owed a debt to Greek historians such as Thucydides, particularly in his treatment of

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<sup>65</sup> See Thucydides 1.22 on speeches. See 2.97-99 for an example of what Grant calls the removal of "irrelevancies". See Grant (1970) p. 115-117 on Thucydides' dislike of Cleon.

<sup>66</sup> Xenophon *Anab* 4.3.10 for an example. See also Grant (1970) p. 127.

<sup>67</sup> See Polybius 1.1 for his purpose in writing. See 1.14 for his declaration of impartiality. See also 6.19-6.42 on the military system, 6.2-6.18 on the political system.

<sup>68</sup> Livy *Praef* 1 on his purpose in writing. See 2.10 for the Horatius episode.

<sup>69</sup> See Livy 30.29-30.33 on Zama. See 30.30 for the speech, and Grant (1970) p. 227.

<sup>70</sup> See Milner, *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science* (2011) pp. xxviii.

<sup>71</sup> See p. 17 fn. 49 above.

<sup>72</sup> See Krebs (2014) p. 207, Riggsby (2006) pp. 133-156. Cato's *Origines* does not survive, and due to the relative paucity of sources we cannot be sure of the influence of early Latin history on Caesar.

<sup>73</sup> See Krebs (2014) pp. 208-211. On flight see Sisenna *Hist* 28 [P34] and *BG* 1.12.3, 2.24.2, 5.18.5, 7.67.6.

the siege of Massilia and in the description of the camp of Pompey.<sup>74</sup> There is similarly evidence that Caesar may have been influenced by Thucydides in the *Bellum Gallicum*, as noted by Krebs and Kraus.<sup>75</sup> In particular, Kraus suggests that *Bellum Gallicum* 1.1.1 may be modelled on Thucydides 3.92.2.<sup>76</sup> Kraus also notes some similarities to Cicero's letters from Cilicia; however the third person narrative is exceptional to Caesar.<sup>77</sup> In spite of these possible influences, overall there are few sources prior to Caesar with which to compare or contrast the battles of the *Bellum Gallicum*, and available influences limited in terms of the construction of battle narrative.

Caesar is also the major source on the wars in Gaul, as there is a relative paucity of information following the *Bellum Gallicum* with which to contrast his account. Riggsby notes that sources on the wars in Gaul seem to substantially follow Caesar, or are problematic in their own right as sources for comparison, as is the case with Cassius Dio who is highly hostile to Caesar.<sup>78</sup> Other major sources include Suetonius, who briefly mentions the wars, Plutarch, and fragments of Appian's *Gallic History*, which give various levels of attention to the battles, none in the detail Caesar describes.<sup>79</sup> Even Frontinus' *Strategmata* has only general information on the battles.<sup>80</sup> As Kraus notes, Livy may have modelled his battles directly on Caesar's style, suggesting that it may be easier to see how he affected the battle narratives of others, than to locate his own sources of influence.<sup>81</sup> Considering Caesar's exceptional status as a detailed personal account of war in the late Republic, with a relative scarcity of historical works with which to compare his style, the text of the *Bellum Gallicum* itself remains the most comprehensive source for analysis of his treatment of battle narrative.

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<sup>74</sup> For a full list of sources, see Krebs (2014) p. 1.

<sup>75</sup> See Krebs (2006) pp. 111-136 and Kraus (2009) pp. 159-174.

<sup>76</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 164.

<sup>77</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 161. See also Cicero *ad Att* 5.20, *ad Fam* 15.4.

<sup>78</sup> See Dio *Roman History* Books 38-40. For examples of Dio's hostility see 38.31, 38.34, 38.35, 39.47-39.48, 39.48.4-39.48.5, 39.53.

<sup>79</sup> See Plutarch, *Caesar* 15, 18-20, 22-26, Suetonius *Div Jul* 25, 47, 55, 58, 69, Appian *Celt* 3-5, 15-18.

<sup>80</sup> See for example Frontinus *Strategmata* 2.1.16, 2.3.18, 2.5.20, 2.6.3, 3.17.6-7, 4.5.11, 4.7.1.

<sup>81</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 160.

## **The *Bellum Gallicum* in Modern Military History**

The approach of modern military historians to Caesar has often been to examine the *Bellum Gallicum* as primarily the record of the historical campaigns contained therein. Such an approach is evident in the 19th Century, when one of the more high profile instances was Stoffel's investigations into the topography and location of battles.<sup>82</sup> This work was continued by other scholars such as Rice Holmes, who in his analyses of the *Bellum Gallicum* examined the accuracy and military context of the battles, and what the work could provide from a historical perspective.<sup>83</sup> Keppie's more recent examination of the battles is particularly representative of the reconstructive objective.<sup>84</sup> So too is Pelling's, who attempts to locate possible sites for some of Caesar's battles, in particular against Ariovistus in Book One.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, the *Bellum Gallicum* has been used as a source of evidence for structural and social elements of the Roman army, as is apparent in the work of Goldsworthy.<sup>86</sup> The importance of the *Bellum Gallicum* to such historians is its value as a primary source, in particular the historical veracity of the information provided, in order to understand the actual wars fought in Gaul and the nature of the forces involved.

Some recent scholarship of battle, particularly as applied to the *Bellum Gallicum*, relies on the idea that the text is primarily reconstructive in its approach. While there is recognition that Caesar may have manipulated his recollection of events to achieve a measure of self-promotion, there is a fundamental assumption that he is attempting to reconstruct the battle and more importantly, explain the result.<sup>87</sup> This is evident in Goldsworthy's *Instinctive Genius, The Depiction of Caesar as General*, which regards

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<sup>82</sup> See Edwards (1917) introduction and pp. 623-631. Edward's notes to the Loeb translation of the *Bellum Gallicum* include Stoffel's maps and diagrams in order to explain the historical context.

<sup>83</sup> See Rice Holmes (1911). More recently see Keppie (1984) pp. 80-102, Gilliver (2007) pp. 122-123, and most notably Goldsworthy (2010).

<sup>84</sup> Keppie (1984) pp. 80-102.

<sup>85</sup> See Pelling (1981). For the inclusion of geographic details and the objective of such information, see pp. 245-260 for the first British invasion.

<sup>86</sup> See the use of the commentaries in Goldsworthy (1996) pp. 171-282 in particular see p. 269.

<sup>87</sup> See Lendon (1999) p. 277 and Kagan (2006), p. 114. Culham (1989) p. 202 encapsulates the problematic attitude towards Caesar based stating "It is simply impossible to imagine Caesar..." "Caesar would not have..." "Caesar could not have..." "It is difficult to imagine Caesar..." Such a view also appears evident in Gelzer, in regards to the work overall (1968) pp. 171-172.

self-promotion to be primarily based on the record of battle activity.<sup>88</sup> The approach of Goldsworthy is that Caesar recorded the battle narratives as the record of victory, and this was in itself sufficient for his self-promotional purposes, with him simply accentuating his own role.<sup>89</sup> This implicit acceptance of the objective is problematic as it does not account for other motives, the plethora of reasons that information might be absent or present in a battle narrative and the full range of reasons that information may have been omitted.<sup>90</sup> The primary determinant for such scholarship is in effect retrospective, looking back to the battle itself as the main source of self-promotion, rather than the presentation of the text and the recollection that Caesar wishes to be the record of events.

One of the most important influences on the military debate is John Keegan's *Face of Battle*, which has been highly influential with regard to the nature of battle narrative.<sup>91</sup> As noted above, Keegan is highly dismissive of Caesar's accounts, due to their emphasis on self-promotion.<sup>92</sup> Caesar's emphasis on self-aggrandisement is problematic as it marginalises the soldier's experience that is, for Keegan, essential in understanding the nature of battle.<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, even where disputed, Keegan's approach to battle has set terms among historians such as J. E. Lendon and K. Kagan, who address Keegan's work in their own analyses of the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>94</sup> Lendon and Kagan both regard the battle narratives as motivated by a desire to explain the

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<sup>88</sup> Goldsworthy (2010) p. 212 acknowledges the existence of promotional objectives in the *Bellum Gallicum*, while using the text for a high level view of Caesar's military activity. The relationship of military historians to the literary dimension is complicated however, as Goldsworthy (1998) p. 193 states that Caesar appears in the right place doing the right thing, stating that the *commentarii* are packed with military information, marred by excessive glorification of Caesar. Sabin (2000) p. 3 also notes the risks of literary distortion in the sources.

<sup>89</sup> See Goldsworthy (2006) p. 280. On the uncritical use of sources see Wheeler (2001) p. 171 who cites Goldsworthy (1996) pp. 117-118. Wheeler (1998) p. 649 is highly critical of Goldsworthy. See also Gerlinger (2008) p. 17 for criticism of Goldsworthy's use of battle scenes.

<sup>90</sup> For example, Goldsworthy (2010) p. 214 states that the tribes in Gaul were treated better than those outside, and uses Ariovistus as an example of brutality against the Germani. However, this statement may rely on the text itself which is highly selective on the treatment of prisoners and captives taken in arms. For example the text is silent on the fate of any Viromandui and Atrebatas combatants after the Sabis River at 2.18-2.28.

<sup>91</sup> See Keegan (1976) pp. 74-75. See also Wheeler (2001) p. 170. Note Daly (2002), Lee (1996) and Sabin (2000) recall Keegan's studies in the titles of their own works on the topic.

<sup>92</sup> See above p. 7.

<sup>93</sup> See Keegan (1976) pp. 61-65. He regards the problems of Caesar as "discontinuous rhythm, conventional imagery, selective incident, high focus on leadership". Keegan prefers Thucydides for his purposes, see pp. 66-67. For the *automata* approach see Wheeler (1998) pp. 648-650.

<sup>94</sup> For references to Keegan, see Kagan (2006) pp. 180-192 and Lendon (1999) p. 273. Lendon is critical of Keegan's statement of the superiority of Thucydides and states this is part of the "easy assumption that there is a timeless ideal towards which military history tends".

result, Lendon comparing Caesar's style with that of Greek historians, and Kagan explaining the narrative as driven by his perspective at the time of the battle.<sup>95</sup> As Lendon states "Caesar's battle narratives are not works of fiction, but attempts to reduce the chaos of reality to understandable narrative, perhaps favorable to himself and his men" and explains the presence or absence of information in reference to this objective.<sup>96</sup> While both scholars recognise that literary conventions are present, Lendon regards these as primarily those of the language of recording battle, and both scholars omit discussion of certain aspects of the passages, such as the use of *exempla*.<sup>97</sup> In particular Lendon bases his understanding on selective battles, such as the Sabis River narrative, rather than analysing the approach to battle across the entire work.

This selectivity regarding the purpose of battle narrative is also evident in V. D. Hanson's comments on the state of military history, where he states that a major unfulfilled task in the field is to identify how the ancients envisaged war. While his objective is an understanding of battle itself, he omits the importance of identifying the full range of literary objectives that may shape the source material, and which are fundamental to this understanding.<sup>98</sup> Wheeler by contrast is much more cognizant of the literary dimension to ancient battle narratives, and highly critical of attempts to apply theories to the information in ancient texts, providing some valuable warnings about purely reconstructive approaches.<sup>99</sup> In these cases however, the objective has still been to study the historical battle, and this aim has shaped the nature of discussion and the use of sources such as Caesar.

In some cases the scholarly analysis is openly dismissive of the idea that the battles contain literary influences. Gilliver illustrates this attitude when stating that Caesar

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<sup>95</sup> See Lendon (1999) p. 275. At p. 276 he states narrative conventions are based in literature and the realities of war. While Lendon recognises the artificialities of narrative, stating at p. 274 that there are many "arbitrary and fanciful" elements, at p. 229, Lendon explains the narrative structure as a development from Greek military narration, influenced by Caesar's personal understanding of battle.

<sup>96</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 277.

<sup>97</sup> See pp. 106-113 for *exempla* in use. Kagan (2006) p. 119 states that Caesar's perspective was only that of general in his narratives.

<sup>98</sup> Hanson (1999) p. 384, states "What is needed is a true balance in form and ideology – a more realistic appraisal of how the ancients envisioned war, presented in a comprehensive, single-author, format that is nevertheless not just part of a summary of equipment, tactics and strategy". While recognising a deficiency Hanson is primarily concerned with the study of historical warfare, which shapes his view of the sources.

<sup>99</sup> See Wheeler (1998) p. 645.



avoids the literary formulas common to histories, and Kagan too is highly critical of the idea that there are literary conventions influencing the battle narratives.<sup>100</sup> Kagan states openly an objective that is not to fit the narratives within the rhetorical conventions of the day, and in particular makes the statement that “Caesar was first an eyewitness to battle, and a commander in battle, and only then an author”.<sup>101</sup> Kagan’s statement illustrates the extreme point of view when she continues “The variety and distinctiveness of Caesar’s tactics suggest that real circumstances, rather than literary paradigms, govern the structure of many of his battle descriptions”.<sup>102</sup> For Kagan, highly critical of any attempt to account for authorial flexibility and creativity, Caesar’s narratives are based on how he perceived causality and the original event.<sup>103</sup> Such a view is an extreme case, but representative of a dismissive attitude to the literary criteria of battle narrative. Within this area of military history, there has not been a comprehensive attempt to understand the motives of the narrator except as an implicit desire to reconstruct the historical event in textual form.

### **Battle and the Scholarship on Caesar**

Beyond the purely military focus on battle, scholarship on Caesar has several broad streams that address battle narrative to varying degrees. The major conclusion to be drawn from these studies is that the text itself appears the best source for studying battle as there is a lack of external evidence with which to contextualise its historical context. This is evident in topics that only marginally address battle, such as investigations of the audience, publication and nature of the commentaries. The search for the audience of the *Bellum Gallicum* has been difficult in the absence of

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<sup>100</sup> Gilliver (2007) pp. 122-123 also states that “others” are more interested in entertaining their audience than the accurate reporting of events. See also Kagan (2006) p. 115. Lendon (1999) p. 275 regards harangues as a convention to be followed to “adorn” an essentially reconstructive narrative.

<sup>101</sup> Kagan (2006) pp. 201-202 fn. 4.

<sup>102</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 121.

<sup>103</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 149. Kagan states “Literary models may have affected Caesar’s narrative presentation of battles more than his conduct of them, but so too did the diverse, real circumstances in which he actually fought”. See Kagan p. 111 on the idea of *res gestae*, and p. 112 where it is stated that “others” argue that literary conventions shape narratives. This leads to largely military explanations for some passages, such as at p. 119 where Kagan states that Caesar does not mention giving orders to the third line against the Helvetii for four possible reasons, one of which is to “smooth” the narrative. Such an approach marginalises any authorial intent beyond the transmission of the historical battle.

contemporary references to the work.<sup>104</sup> In particular, the military reception of the work by contemporaries of Caesar is hard to determine, and who among his contemporaries actually read the *Commentarii* is unclear.<sup>105</sup> The unresolved issues are indicative of the absence of evidence regarding the military context in which the *Bellum Gallicum* was received, and while it is possible to state that the audience was probably an aristocratic Roman one based on Cicero's reception of the text, the reception of the military information contained therein, at least among Caesar's contemporaries, is less clear.<sup>106</sup>

The lack of evidence regarding the audience is compounded by uncertainty over the date of publication, and the problem in determining whether the *commentarii* were written as a single work after the campaigns, or published periodically and closer to the occurrence of each campaign.<sup>107</sup> Publication and composition dates are important as the time of composition may have affected Caesar's memory of events, and what sources he used. They may also have influenced how Caesar presented affairs, as any foreknowledge of future events could influence the content of a particular account.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, a single publication after the events of 52 BCE might lend itself to a more structured approach and the integration of the battles into an overarching theme or motif.<sup>109</sup> With composition and publication so important, several approaches to this issue have been attempted using the text itself. Earlier literary examination of the *Bellum Gallicum* by scholars such as Schlicher regarded an apparent shift in complexity as evidence of periodic publication, however more recent work by the

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<sup>104</sup> There are of course references to the war; most notably Cicero *Prov Cons* 32-33. Cicero also refers to his brother's experience at *ad Fam* 7.10.1-7.10.3.

<sup>105</sup> See Wiseman, (1998) pp. 1-9 who examines the idea of an internal, soldierly audience in opposition to Gelzer, (1968) p. 171, Meier (1995) p. 253, and Rambaud (1966) p. 365, who all argue for an aristocratic audience. As Riggsby (2006) p. 13 states, Wiseman has not proven his case yet.

<sup>106</sup> See below pp. 41-43 on reception. Where this study discusses an audience, it is in relation to Caesar's objectives regarding the narratee and only general references are made, with the assumption of a primarily Roman aristocratic audience per Riggsby (2006) p. 13.

<sup>107</sup> Kraus (2005a) p. 102, and (2009) p. 164 notes the unresolved issue, and its importance for scholarship. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 9.

<sup>108</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 193 on foresight. See Welch (1998) pp. 93-94, 106. fn. 55. Welch discusses publication and the representation of subordinates. The structure of Book Five illustrates a strong interconnectivity within that book that could suggest the primary objective at the time of writing was the events of that year. Within Book Five foreknowledge shapes the construction of the passages on Britain, the defence of a camp under Quintus Cicero, and the massacre of a legion. See Chapter Five pp. 319-339 for a full discussion.

<sup>109</sup> See Wiseman (1998) pp. 1-9, cf. fn. 1, who discusses the concept. Rambaud (1966) and Gelzer (1968) are among the scholars who propose singular composition. Note that Riggsby (2006) pp. 1, 9 tends to agree with the idea of serial composition, in spite of noting an overarching objective to the work.

likes of Gotoff and Williams state that this is not the case, suggesting that stylistic analysis has not answered the question of composition date.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore Wiseman attempts to show that the work was published periodically, by citing inconsistencies regarding the fate of the Nervii, and a changing style which he attributes to higher stakes as Caesar wrote the latter books. However this has also proven inconclusive.<sup>111</sup> Attempts to demonstrate a single composition date have a similar issue due to a lack of evidence, Riggsby noting some of the issues in determining the manner the work was written.<sup>112</sup> Attempts to date the work are inconclusive, and the exact date of authorship for the battles is similarly unclear.

Several studies have examined the genre of the commentaries; however these also are unable to fully explain the role of battle, due to the lack of corroborating evidence.<sup>113</sup> *Commentarii* were an established form of reporting in Rome, and at least in the records that survive they appeared to provide the basic outline of events; however no records survive of works as comprehensive as Caesar's.<sup>114</sup> His *commentarii* are clearly more than simple battle reports, as the extensive excursus of Book Six suggests, but their objective is not clearly stated.<sup>115</sup> In spite of this lack of context, the issue of genre has been addressed by Cleary, who regards Caesar as attempting a synthesis of *commentarii*, *res gestae* and history.<sup>116</sup> Bömer similarly examines the

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<sup>110</sup> See Schlicher (1936) pp. 216-217, 223. Schlicher argues that the work changes from defending and justifying Caesar to a more complex style as it progresses. Such a pattern to the work has been disputed by Williams (1985) pp. 216, 226. Williams argues that the early books are not Caesar testing out his methodology but are well thought out and staged. See also Gotoff (1984) p. 15 who regards the Sabis River narrative as a particular departure from the *commentarius* style.

<sup>111</sup> Wiseman (1998) p. 2, argues against the unity of writing, citing Book Two where the Nervii are wiped out, and in Book Five where there are 60,000 Nervii. At p. 6 he regards the commentaries as broken down broadly into two sections 58-57 BCE (Book 1-4) and 53-52 BCE (Book 5-7) For further discussion see Riggsby (2006) p. 13.

<sup>112</sup> See Berard (1985), Riggsby (2006) pp. 10-11, and Nordling (1991), p. 60. Torigian (1998) p. 45 analyses the work in terms of stylistic criteria and argues for a unified approach to writing, noting a ring composition, with Vercingetorix as a "reverse image of the scheming Orgetorix". Nousek (2004) p. 63, agrees that the first chapter on geography and the Orgetorix episode contain signs of a "larger rhetorical design of the *Bellum Gallicum*". See also Kraus (2009) p. 160.

<sup>113</sup> Kraus (2009) pp. 160-161. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 133-150.

<sup>114</sup> Kraus (2005a) p. 97. See also Adcock (1956) pp. 6-18, Görler (1976) pp. 96-97, and Bömer (1953) who provides the best history of commentaries. See also Cicero's proposed commentary on his own consulship, which does not survive, discussed at *ad Attic* 2.1.1-2.1.2. Riggsby (2006) p. 146 lists those works that are known to exist.

<sup>115</sup> See Kraus (2005a) pp. 98-99. See also Cleary (1985) p. 345 who notes this regarding the customs of the Britons in Book Five and the Gauls in Book Six. Nousek (2004) at p. 3 states that few have tried to put the *commentarii* into a genre.

<sup>116</sup> See Cleary (1985) pp. 346-347, who notes the similarities with Xenophon's *Anabasis*. See also Cicero *Brut* 262 where they are called *commentarii*. Suetonius *Div Iul* 56.1-56.2, Hirtius 8 pr 2. Nordling (1991) p. 33, states that Caesar is providing an interpretation of events for "those who

idea that the work is an attempt at a unique format.<sup>117</sup> Recently, Nousek's dissertation on the *Bellum Gallicum* extensively analyses the content of the work, including some battle analysis, to argue that he was engaging with a debate on the nature of history.<sup>118</sup> While useful in terms of history and genre, such works do not comprehensively conclude how far battle balances authorial objectives against the purely descriptive, in the absence of other extended *commentarii* with which to contrast the work. Nevertheless some useful analysis of battle has been performed, such as by Ash, who investigates the association of epic with the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>119</sup> Ash examines how the *commentarii* and epic, in particular the *Aeneid*, have a top heavy emphasis in that they examine the actions from the perspective of the aristocratic leaders. Ash's work, like others, provides some useful insights into the manner in which Caesar constructs particular battles, even if the question of genre remains elusive.

## Studies in Style

In spite of a lack of resolution regarding genre and the purpose of the work, there is still evidence to suggest that battle narratives were constructed according to aristocratic presentation criteria. Caesar's reputation as an accomplished orator formed the background to his career, and there has been considerable research on the style and language used in the commentaries.<sup>120</sup> Quintilian provides early evidence on style stating that due to Caesar's skill as an orator he would have made an excellent

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would write history" later. Nordling p. 32 also notes that Cicero and Hirtius refer to *commentarii* as having a "literary parentage" in the war diaries of Alexander the Great.

<sup>117</sup> Bömer (1953) p. 250. See also Rüpke (1992) pp. 210-216; Berard (1985) pp. 94-95.

<sup>118</sup> Nousek, (2004) p. 2 regards the *commentarii* as historical, however noting that Kraus and Woodman (1997) pp. 1-9 do not include Caesar in their discussion of Latin historians. See also Nousek (2004) p. ii as Nousek states that as much as the *Bellum Gallicum* is a record of deeds, it is also a means of Caesar answering a contemporary debate about language, history and writing of history. Nousek p. 20 regards it as a work of literature leaving aside the political aspects and that Caesar was interested in linguistic and grammatical concerns. Nousek regards the work as a response to *de Oratore* and historiographical ideals in *ad Fam* 5.12. Schlicher (1936) p. 224 also argues for a development towards Cicero's historiographical ideal. As Nousek notes however at p. 22, ancient conventions for genre were "ill-defined" "fluid and less restrictive" than modern classifications suggest. Melchior (2004) p. 18 notes that the narrative is a "natural fit" for events but using a framework, and is therefore not unhistorical. Kraus (2005b) pp. 246-247 analyses 5.44, and the Pullo, Vorenus story and how it advertises Caesar's 'affiliation with mainstream historiography' i.e. the use of *virtus*, *vir*, and *ver* words.

<sup>119</sup> See Ash (2002) p. 261. As Ash notes, in his account of Pharsalus in the *Bellum Civile* Caesar gives the location of subordinate leaders, but no contribution by them as the battle focuses on the action of the armies and the supreme commanders.

<sup>120</sup> See Eden (1962); Gotoff (1984); Williams (1985); Kraus (2005a). See also Oppermann (1933); Schlicher (1936).

career on the rostrum if he had not taken up war.<sup>121</sup> Cicero also appears to have admired his facility with language, noting that the commentaries are more than just material for historians, presumably due to the skill with which they were written.<sup>122</sup> As Fantham notes, there is evidence that Caesar had an extensive literary background, with Suetonius even mentioning that he had a background in writing tragedy.<sup>123</sup> While these sources often do not directly address battle, they provide evidence that he had the literary background to develop his battles to more sophisticated standards than simple battle reports.

With regard to the literary dimension of battle, the nature of the presentation has been addressed by several scholars. Moles and Wiseman noted in general that embellishment was criticised both by Thucydides and Livy.<sup>124</sup> The recognition of embellishment has even led to neglect of more important objectives, as indicated by Collins who views as “mere literary flourish” the preliminaries of battle against Ariovistus.<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless literary development of the text has been accepted with Welch noting that Caesar selected his material for “focus with a sophistication and *rigueur* recalling the cinematic”.<sup>126</sup> As Collins states the text is “rich in literary

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<sup>121</sup> See Quintilian 10.1.114.

<sup>122</sup> See Cicero *Brut* 262. Cicero states that Caesar was unsurpassed as an orator, as cited in Suetonius *Div Iul* 55.1-55.2. Note that there is always the risk that Cicero was just being diplomatic or even ironic, as noted by Powell (1998) p. 114 or even critical, as note by Kraus (2005a) p. 111. See also Tacitus *Dial.* 21.5, Plutarch *Caesar* 3.3. See also Adcock (1956) p. 13, Nordling (1991) pp. 31-32.

<sup>123</sup> Fantham (1996) p. 47. See Suet *Div Iul* 56.7 for Caesar’s background in tragedy. Caesar also supposedly dictated a treatise on word formations and regularity in syntax to secretaries while crossing the Alps. He dedicated it to Cicero with the claim that extending intellectual frontiers was a greater triumph than any military victory. Caesar per Aulus Gellius *NA* 1.10.4 was also supposed to have said to steer away from an unfamiliar word as if it were a reef, as by implication the reader is shocked by a new word and the text “shipwrecked”. See Yavetz, (1983) p. 211 and Spaeth (1936/7) p. 541.

<sup>124</sup> See Moles (1993) p. 101. Thucydides at 1.21.1 criticized embellishment i.e. in Homer, Herodotus. See also pp. 93, 95 where Moles notes this same motivation as early as Herodotus, who wanted to record marvelous things and was selective in his choices of what to narrate. See also Wiseman (1993) p. 134 who notes how Polybius 2.56.10-12 criticized Phylarchus, stating tragedy was to “thrill and charm” but a historian’s task was “to instruct and persuade”. Livy also said some things he read were more suited to the stage than factual at 5.21.8-9. However, Arrian, a military man reported both what is worth believing and what is worth telling *Anab* pref 1.3. See also Gabba (1981) on the idea of “true” and “false” history. See Wiseman (1979) p. 30-31, who notes rhetorical training encouraged a “cavalier” attitude to historical fact i.e. Atticus in *Brut* 42. At pp. 5-6 he notes that in Cicero *Att* 2.1.1-2.1.2 Cicero admits to ornamenting his own consulship’s *commentarii*.

<sup>125</sup> Collins (1972) pp. 927, 930. He states of apparent embellishments before the Ariovistus battle that these are “not seriously representing the facts” and that what others call propaganda is “high literary art”.

<sup>126</sup> Welch and Powell (1998) preface p. viii. See Kraus (2005a) p. 113, fn. 58. Rowe (1967) p. 399 notes of the *Bellum Civile*, that *sententiae* grow as the work progresses. Rowe analyses four episodes in the *Bellum Civile* to show success/hybris/catastrophe dramatic structure.

drama”.<sup>127</sup> In spite of the dismissals this focus on the artistic dimension opens up possibilities for battle, as Harris notes that embellishments in combat, such as descriptions of fear, allow Caesar to promote his own abilities as commander.<sup>128</sup> Whether they address battle directly or the work in general, scholars have addressed some aspects of battle in their examination of the level of presentation applied to the work, which can have value in understanding the purpose of these passages.

These general observations have been more directly addressed by scholars who support the idea that battle appears with the framework of a developed literary structure.<sup>129</sup> Collins in particular notes the *Bellum Gallicum*’s superiority to the *Bellum Civile* in terms of “coherence, proportion, smoothness of transitions, variety of sentence, and the marshaling and ordering of ideas”.<sup>130</sup> As Eden notes, Caesar seems “incapable of wasting words or of becoming obscure” due to his apparent brevity and clarity.<sup>131</sup> Damon makes similar observations on how the author persuades through simple language, although Damon’s study is almost exclusively of the *Bellum Civile*.<sup>132</sup> Schlicher also contends that there is a pattern to the *Bellum Gallicum*, noting that passages such as the ethnographic excursus of Book Six fall into an increasingly complex style.<sup>133</sup> Such studies have focused on the skill with which the commentaries were constructed, and while the scholars often see an economy of language, they nevertheless recognise a level of literary complexity and design to the overall work.

In particular, there is a substantial body of work on the more complex attributes of the work, including useful examinations of battle and the style of these narratives. As Richter notes: *als kritischen Beobachter eines kampferlaufes...die Kunst des Dargestellers spiegelt den Meister der Befehlstechnik*.<sup>134</sup> Gotoff also provides some

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<sup>127</sup> Collins (1972) p. 27.

<sup>128</sup> Harris, (2006) p. 311. As Harris states, fear allows Caesar to restore morale or show that by following orders certain situations would never have happened.

<sup>129</sup> See Adcock, (1956), Rambaud (1966) Riggsby (2006) p. 10.

<sup>130</sup> Collins (1972) p. 164.

<sup>131</sup> Eden (1962) pp. 95, 101 states that Caesar is making himself intelligible to all Romans by using the “basic essentials of what was recognisably Latin”.

<sup>132</sup> Damon (1994) pp. 184-195.

<sup>133</sup> Schlicher (1936) pp. 216-217, 222-223. For instance Schlicher notes that heroism in the lower ranks is not introduced until Book Four. This discounts Baculus in Book Two at 2.25, discussed below at pp. 117-119. In response to those who see development as the work progresses, Gotoff (1984) p. 8 notes that they have to come to terms with the Sabis River account at 2.16-27 and “a substantial section of highly ornamental and contrived prose coming so early in the corpus”.

<sup>134</sup> Richter (1977) p. 149. See also Pascucci (1973).

extensive analysis of battle, including how the battle of the Sabis River uses language to enhance the sense of randomness regarding the Roman formations.<sup>135</sup> As he further notes, the “encomium” to those who fought at Sambre is “so obviously ornamental” that the passage has been held in suspicion and even rejected by some editors.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, Gotoff’s analysis provides some useful information regarding the structure of this particular battle.<sup>137</sup> Similarly, Williams examines the Bibracte narrative and notes some important ways in which language and syntax convey the essential characteristics of the battle.<sup>138</sup> Such analyses illustrate that the battle narratives of the *Bellum Gallicum* display a complexity of structure and style that needs to be accounted for in understanding their role.

Furthermore scholars have noted the influence of rhetoric on the content of the work. Kraus analyses the content of the *Bellum Gallicum* for its use of historical and rhetorical techniques to persuasive effect, a study that has bearing on the manner that battle, in particular siege, is presented.<sup>139</sup> The main area in which rhetorical studies have been applied to the *Bellum Gallicum* is with regard to the speeches, and some of the observations made have relevance to the battle narratives. Rambaud devotes an extensive section to the speeches, in order to demonstrate that Caesar uses them for propagandistic purposes, and Rasmussen also examines speeches and their persuasive role.<sup>140</sup> More recently the discussion over rhetorical techniques and the construction of the *commentarii* is addressed by Wiseman, who provides a useful summary of Cicero’s attitude towards ornamentation, and an examination of the way speeches could be adorned or use “colour” in order to support the overall objective of the piece of work.<sup>141</sup> While Wiseman does not specifically examine the *Bellum Gallicum*, the

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<sup>135</sup> Gotoff (1984) p. 8. See also 2.21.

<sup>136</sup> Gotoff (1984) p. 15. See also Pascucci (1956) p. 134. See also 2.27.

<sup>137</sup> Gotoff (1984) pp. 12-15 notes that Caesar shares some “essential literary techniques” with the “orator and essayist”.

<sup>138</sup> Williams (1985) pp. 222-223. Williams illustrates how language reflects both the ease with which the Romans break the Helvetian *phalanx*, and then, through syntax, the confusion caused. Williams regards Caesar’s syntax as reflecting the ebb and flow of battle.

<sup>139</sup> Kraus (2005b) pp. 242-243. See also Cape, Jr, R. W (1997) p. 213. As Cape notes, Cicero understood the facts of history to be a part of the “rhetorical superstructure” as much as their stylistic treatment. At pp. 217-218, Cape notes that the Romans regarded history as having to have a didactic purpose. See also Mannetter (1995) p. 98 for a discussion of rhetoric and the *Bellum Gallicum*.

<sup>140</sup> See Nordling (1991) pp. 50-71 for a summary of this topic. Nordling in particular discusses the contrasting views of Rambaud (1966) and Rasmussen (1963)

<sup>141</sup> See Wiseman (1979) p. 29. At p. 28, Wiseman notes how Thucydides 1.22.1 said in regards to speeches that he would say what was called for on each occasion. Note that at p. 8 “colour” is to put

observations regarding Cicero and his expectations regarding his own commentaries provide useful context in which to view the level of complexity that could be expected.<sup>142</sup> More directly, Nordling's thesis has addressed the speech of the *Bellum Gallicum* and the strategies employed in the work.<sup>143</sup> Nordling's work is valuable for an understanding of battle as speeches such as that of Critognatus in Book Seven occur within or in relation to a battle, and therefore can directly inform the interpretation of the narrative.<sup>144</sup> James' analysis of Caesar's speech in the near mutiny at Vesontio is particularly relevant, and it informs the presentation of the battle against Ariovistus.<sup>145</sup> While studies in rhetoric do not always address battle narrative directly, they provide significant insight into how these passages are constructed.

Narratological studies also address to varying levels the content of battle narrative. The complexity of the information presented in the *Bellum Gallicum* is important for Riggsby, who states that there can be a form of "covert argumentation" which is based on a reader's pre-existing knowledge.<sup>146</sup> Mannerter has also examined the *Bellum Gallicum* from a narratological perspective, although as Nousek notes, Mannerter does not use narratological techniques.<sup>147</sup> While actual combat receives less attention than other parts of the work, Mannerter makes some observations about the manner in which Caesar constructs battle, particularly contextual catalogues.<sup>148</sup> Most importantly, Kraus has specifically applied narratological techniques to Book Seven of the *Bellum Gallicum*, to demonstrate the presentation techniques involved.<sup>149</sup> On Caesar as narrator, Grillo's recent article makes observations regarding the *Bellum*

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a slant on what is said, and a pupil of rhetoric saw this as painting its face with "convincing colours". See also Diodorus Siculus 20.2.1.

<sup>142</sup> Cicero *ad Att* 2.1.1-2.1.2.

<sup>143</sup> See Nordling (1991) pp. 2-.8. At p. 7 Nordling notes that Caesar's early training in rhetoric "reinforced stylistic propensities toward grammatical correctness and restraint".

<sup>144</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 107-118. On the speech see also Richter (1977) pp. 76-78.

<sup>145</sup> James (2000) pp. 54-65. See also pp. 146-161 below which examines the relationship of the near mutiny to the battle.

<sup>146</sup> Riggsby (2006) p. 7.

<sup>147</sup> See Nousek (2004) p. 15. See also Mannerter (1995) p. vi. Mannerter argues that stylistic standards, not standards of truth apply to the work.

<sup>148</sup> Mannerter pp. 138-175 on catalogues.

<sup>149</sup> Kraus (2010) at pp. 46-48, Kraus notes how the Avaricum defences are stylised so they are typical characteristics not particular. At p. 56, Kraus notes the centurions seem as stylised representatives of the legions.



*Civile* that are also relevant to the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>150</sup> The idea that battle exists as part of a construction, not only designed to capture an event persuasively but aesthetically, as befits a work in an age where the activity of writing was itself an artistic aim, is supported by these studies.

A recent work by Gerlinger addresses the topic of battle rhetoric directly, including Caesar in a study of Tacitus and Sallust.<sup>151</sup> Gerlinger groups battle scenes according to audience interest, such as the virtues on display, in order to determine the level of realism in the scenes.<sup>152</sup> Gerlinger notes the presence of certain common elements to battle narrative, such as dispositions, the speech and a crisis.<sup>153</sup> However these include scenes that seem “unrealistic” such as troops fighting over the bodies of their fallen comrades.<sup>154</sup> While Gerlinger views such scenes as common in Roman historiography, the observations sometimes impact an understanding of why Caesar constructed his battle narratives.<sup>155</sup> Gerlinger’s work focuses on realism; however it informs some aspects of the current study when the historicity of a passage is problematic.

## Studies of the Narrative

Academic inquiries address the text as a whole, along with elements of battle, to examine Caesar’s purposes in writing, his style and methodology, or to determine the underlying paradigms that form the basis of the commentaries. These analyses tend to look at patterns of argument that include the battles, but can span the entire work. An aspect of battle important to such study is whether the narrative is primarily descriptive, or a carefully constructed argument, and a major field of research tends to view the work on the basis of structure and lines of argumentation. As Martin Jr. states, the purpose of *commentarii* are to establish *gloria* in posterity, but it is possible

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<sup>150</sup> Grillo (2012) pp. 244, 250, 253, 256. See Görler (1976) on the flexibility of Caesar’s narration. Görler at p. 118 notes a shift to an “Olympian” style as the work progresses. See also Görler (1980) on the Sabis River account and Caesar’s role as narrator.

<sup>151</sup> Gerlinger (2008). At p. 24 Gerlinger notes that these are sources chosen due to their military experience.

<sup>152</sup> Gerlinger (2008) p. 27.

<sup>153</sup> Gerlinger (2008) p. 18. At p. 24 Gerlinger notes a general lack of study in the field of battle rhetoric.

<sup>154</sup> Gerlinger (2008) pp. 19, 150-154.

<sup>155</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) p. 24 on the commonality of certain scenes.

to do this by a simple record of events or a more structured narrative designed to encourage a particular interpretation.<sup>156</sup> By contrast Gardner states in *The Gallic Menace in Caesar's Propaganda*, the idea that "Caesar is having to argue his case all the way".<sup>157</sup> Murphy looks at such ideas broadly in determining themes applicable to each book, and while these take a very simple view of the overall work, they raise the possibility that there might be specific objectives at various points in the work.<sup>158</sup> Ramage also examines how self-presentation is paramount throughout the work and forms a background to activity, as the narrative focuses on the personal attributes that he wants to display.<sup>159</sup> While other approaches to argument are examined in the relevant chapters, it is important to note that there is for some scholars a consistent line of argumentation evident throughout the work.

One of the major streams of academic study that has influenced analysis of the battle narratives has been interested in the propagandistic aspect of the work. Asinius Pollio is attributed with an early remark about this aspect, noting that Caesar was careless with the truth.<sup>160</sup> Most notably, Rambaud's work on *Tendenz* regards the entire work as heavily manipulated in the interests of self-promotion, and calls Caesar's ability *l'art de la déformation historique*.<sup>161</sup> This is a view qualified by Collins, who notes how modern ideas of propaganda are not applicable to studies of the *commentarii*.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Martin Jr. (1965) p. 67.

<sup>157</sup> Gardner (1983) pp. 184, 188. Gardner notes that the Ariovistus threat, like the Helvetii is weak, so Caesar has to stress the Germanic menace and arrogance of Ariovistus. On Ariovistus see also Christ (1974).

<sup>158</sup> Murphy (1977) p. 234.

<sup>159</sup> Ramage (2003) at p. 364 notes some thirty attributes and virtues that are attributed to Caesar in the *Bellum Gallicum*. Several are only mentioned once, but all add up to some 300 times. At p. 376 Ramage raises the possibility that the virtues and attributes are introduced in competition to Pompey's reputation.

<sup>160</sup> See Nordling p. 44. According to Suetonius, Pollio stated that Caesar's commentaries were *parum diligenter parumque integra veritate compositos*. Suetonius *Div Iul* 56.4. Nordling notes however this may be in reference to the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>161</sup> Rambaud (1966) pp. 363-364. As he states *Outre les falsifications proprement dites, décelables par la méthode historique, il faut reconnaître dans ces mémoires des convergences de procédés littéraires qui sont la preuve d'une tendance. L'exposé d'une suite d'événements s'y trouve doublé d'une suggestion constante, sollicitant le lecteur de juger les faits et les personnages au gré inavoué du narrateur...L'exactitude matérielle des Commentaires prouve donc l'habileté du grand homme, nullement sa véracité. César montre la réalité, mais du côté qui convient à ses intérêts, et les formes de son récit suscitent chez le lecteur une impression fautive: c'est ce que nous appelons l'art de la déformation historique*. On the topic see also Gerlinger (2008) p. 23; Heubner (1974) p. 104; Klaus (1974) p. 149; Walser (1995). Rowe (1967) at p. 403 notes that a lack of *Tendenz* in the narrative ignores the *Tendenz* in the "unified conception of the forces at work behind events".

<sup>162</sup> See Collins (1972) p. 939. Nousek (2004) p. 8 discusses the arguments on mendacity. For Kagan (2006), the issue is critical to establishing the "Eye of Command" approach, and so discusses it at p.

This issue of *Tendenz* has been critical for an analysis of the essential truth of what Caesar states, and various reasons are presented as to how far he would manipulate or outright misrepresent affairs.<sup>163</sup> In opposition to this view, other scholars such as Balsden have directly challenged the idea that he had to justify his campaigns, even while recognising the self-promotional nature of the work.<sup>164</sup> Stevens even states that Caesar could not “garble the facts” due to their being on public record.<sup>165</sup> However the demarcation between truth and falsehood is not regarded as consistent by Seager who sees varying levels of distortion occurring through the work, arguing that it was only the early books that required any form of justification.<sup>166</sup> This issue of *Tendenz* is important to the historical context of the work, but also extends to battle narrative in the explanation for the content and structure of the individual accounts.

Lines of argumentation extend to the presentation of military affairs; and can have a significant effect on the understanding of battle. Conley argues that Caesar is not simply centring each battle on his own contribution, and the manner in which he shares *gloria* in the Sabis River account is evidence that there is more to the work than self-promotion through a focus on his personal contribution.<sup>167</sup> In *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter*, Welch explains that the relationship of Caesar to Pompey was important for his self-representation in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and notes that Caesar’s inability to falsify records led to him focusing on the army, officers and himself, and a general interest in Gauls and Germans.<sup>168</sup> Wells notes with regard to the representation of the enemy that Gauls are differentiated from Germani, in order to

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109, deciding in favour of the work as essentially a reconstruction of Caesar’s perspective. By contrast, see Wiseman (1993) pp. 126-132 on the need for truth in history.

<sup>163</sup> See Nordling (1991) p. 165. Nordling notes how the argument has been thoroughly examined. See in general Balsden (1957); Rambaud (1966); Collins (1972); Walser (1995).

<sup>164</sup> Balsdon (1957) p. 27. At p. 19 Balsdon states that Caesar’s role as “field marshal” means there is nothing suspicious behind the absence of background. At p. 21 he states Caesar may have told lies in the *Bellum Civile* and certainly omits unflattering information such as the mutiny. However on p. 22 Balsdon defends these as not gross misrepresentations, at p. 24 stating there were plenty in Rome who could dispute Caesar’s falsehoods if they existed.

<sup>165</sup> Stevens (1952) p. 4, states that Caesar would have found it impossible to garble facts as they were already on public record in *acta diurna* but that he could alter the point of view in his presentation.

<sup>166</sup> Seager (2003) p. 19 argues that Caesar only justifies his campaigns for the first year. As it progressed the war justified itself. Even at outset Seager states the explanation is only “perfunctory” and “never in the least apologetic” nor is there any hint he anticipated criticism or the need to defend his actions. See Chapter Five for qualification of Seager’s idea, and for justification in general.

<sup>167</sup> Conley (1983) p. 173. Conley states that the *Bellum Gallicum* is fashioned around *causas* for the outcomes of battles and campaigns.

<sup>168</sup> Welch (1998) p. 87. See also p. 85 where Welch notes the work as a response to Pompey’s reputation.

present the campaigns as a completed accomplishment.<sup>169</sup> Recently, Jervis has examined closely the presentation of the enemy, in particular how their characteristics protect the author from ideas of the effeminising influences of conquest.<sup>170</sup> Jervis' research provides some valuable insights into the disparity between comments on the *virtus* of the enemy and actual performance in battle, which are important when considering issues of morale and its effects.<sup>171</sup> Other articles on the work address similar issues, and for Rawlings, the general issue of the enemy representation is important, arguing that the enemy are a product of specific modes of portrayal.<sup>172</sup> Krebs even performs an examination of the representation of geography, to show that Caesar masters such features, an argument that can have reference to topography in the campaign narratives.<sup>173</sup>

While the level of investigation varies, battle generally falls within the scope of general studies even when the focus is on broader patterns. For example Torigian examines the λόγος of the *Bellum Gallicum*, and Hall also examines how issues of *ratio* and *romanitas* are portrayed, both of which provide potential interpretive frameworks for battle narrative.<sup>174</sup> Alternatively Dodington's dissertation addresses the function of engineering references, to demonstrate that Caesar was promoting aspects of his own character, and while this is not directly in relation to battle narrative, descriptions such as the fortifications at Alesia occur within passages that describe a siege, and therefore have relevance to the narration of battle.<sup>175</sup> Furthermore, there has been a recent attempt by Riggsby to construct an overarching purpose to the work to demonstrate that Caesar foreshadowed and prepared for his

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<sup>169</sup> Wells (2001) pp. 112-113.

<sup>170</sup> Jervis (2001) p. 141 states that Caesar stresses the primitiveness of Gauls to remove himself from dangers of contact with effeminising people and being like a Pompey, Sulla or Marius.

<sup>171</sup> See Jervis (2001) p. 52. Jervis notes that Caesar's emphasis on *virtus* is not related to the difficulties he faced in battle.

<sup>172</sup> Rawlings (1998) p. 179. Both sides claim they have courage, and that the other relies on stratagems i.e. at Avaricum. See pp. 261-264 below for the representation of Vercingetorix.

<sup>173</sup> Krebs (2006) p. 117. Krebs notes the idea of the use of precise distances i.e. in the Helvetii account at 1.2.3 and the idea of "intellectual mastery". 1.8.1, 1.21.1, 1.23.1 all give the impression of "control" of knowledge. See also Bertrand (1997) p. 108; however note that Bertrand accepts that the text is representative of an attempt to communicate intelligence accurately.

<sup>174</sup> See Torigian, (1998) p. 45, who examines a rhetorical design to the work. See also Hall (1998) p.11, who notes that Caesar is "vigilant" to insults against the state and threats i.e. 5.7.1-5.7.2 and see fn. 6. At p. 28 Hall regards Caesar attempting to be the voice of Rome, imposing linguistic and political order.

<sup>175</sup> Dodington (1980) pp. 50-51 argues that those who are given credit for works are those Caesar defeated, in order to show Caesar's industry and intelligence. See p. 55 regarding Alesia.

own political ambitions.<sup>176</sup> According to Riggsby, this underlying purpose is evident throughout the work, such as in the manner the Gallic threat builds.<sup>177</sup> Riggsby's analysis of battle examines themes such as just war, and Gaul's potential for subjugation, that rely on a particular presentation of battle, such as the way that Gallic siege techniques and warfare develop, in order to demonstrate the danger to Rome.<sup>178</sup> Such research must balance literary reasons for the inclusion of information against more direct self-promotion through the record of achievements and Nousek's identification of a meta-literary function to the bridge in Book Six, while possible, should also recognise that the passage is also purporting to describe Caesar's actual activity, and may therefore have a more direct promotional purpose of recording his deeds.<sup>179</sup> The necessity of balancing the nature of self-promotion, whether through literary skill or the actions described, ensures that as battle falls within the scope of such studies, they can significantly inform the presentation of particular passages in the narrative.

There are some important studies on individual battles that directly affect an understanding of these passages. In Powell's *Julius Caesar and the Presentation of Massacre* and Levick's *The Venetii Revisited*, the reasons behind specific campaign passages are investigated.<sup>180</sup> Melchior addresses battle narratives specifically in *Compositions with Blood: Violence in Late Republican Prose* and regards them as adhering to a pattern in which the enemy threat is eventually dispersed though a focus on wounds and killing.<sup>181</sup> Erickson in particular examines the naval battle against the

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<sup>176</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 205-214 for a summary. At p. 121 Riggsby regards Caesar as setting up imperial authority in the *Bellum Gallicum*. At pp. 82-83, he states that Caesar builds up the Gaulish threat to legitimise war and increase Roman prowess. In particular at p. 45 he argues that the representation of land is to show land is available. In addition, Riggsby examines ideas of "just war" at pp. 157-189 and other themes. See in particular Chapter Three pp. 73-105 "Technology, Virtue, Victory".

<sup>177</sup> Riggsby (2006) pp. 101-105.

<sup>178</sup> Riggsby (2006) pp. 73-105, 157.

<sup>179</sup> See Nousek (2004) p. 122 and the presentation of the Rhine Bridge built at 6.9. There is an argument that the bridge in Book Six "operates as a meta-literary level, functioning more as a narratological bridge from one level of discourse to another, and back again". Such analysis may attribute too literary an objective to Caesar.

<sup>180</sup> Levick (1998) p. 71, Caesar must be a great leader and show he is versed in military affairs and has *auctoritas* with troops. See also Powell (1998) p. 111. As Powell states "For Caesar, to distort unobtrusively was not a simple matter".

<sup>181</sup> Melchior (2004) p. 38. At p. 18. Melchior notes how Caesar uses a revenge cycle. At p. 179, Caesar's "reassuring framework" is noted and that this idea imposes a level of unity to battle narration. As Melchior notes, at p. 19, the idea of reciprocal action as a structure fits actual

Venetii to demonstrate how Caesar portrays Roman and Gallic *virtus*.<sup>182</sup> Görler examines the role of the narrator in the Sabis River account, and Brown examines narrative contrasts between the same account, and the battle of Pharsalus in the *Bellum Civile*, providing some useful observations on the construction of these passages.<sup>183</sup> In the process of following these lines of argument, such investigations provide context to battle and the purpose of the information supplied.

In spite of the large body of scholarship that includes battle, analysis of battle across the work, involving a full examination of Caesar's persuasive techniques using military data, has not yet been fully undertaken. Therefore an examination of battle, most importantly in the context of the campaign narratives in which they appear is required. The following case studies illustrate the various ways that Caesar uses battle to meet his objectives, and while each chapter examines an aspect of the relationship, the common feature is that the battles all have a purpose that extends beyond the purely descriptive. The analysis of battle enables an understanding of how he structured the narrative for self-promotion, and the place of the battles in the work. Not only does such an examination reflect on the role that battle and other military information plays, but it allows a deeper understanding of the concerns that Caesar had while writing these passages, and the manner in which he was willing to utilise such material in the pursuit of his reputation and career.

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recipocracy as a motive in battle. Melchior does not devote the whole thesis to the *Bellum Gallicum* and is not able to address the varying objectives evident from a study of all the battle narratives.

<sup>182</sup> Erickson (2002) p. 602. Note that Erickson draws an unusual conclusion at p. 616, in the idea that the falling masts are symbolic of castration.

<sup>183</sup> See Brown (1999) p. 333. Brown states that the clash of foreign armies and cultures lends itself to "heroic literary interpretation". At pp. 333-334, 336, Brown examines the manner of portraying the enemy, issues of *virtus* in the *Bellum Gallicum* and Caesar's use of evocative language to describe the attack of the Nervii. Görler (1980) p. 31 examines the varying role of the narrator and contrasts the needs of the narrative with the question of *Tendenz*.

## CHAPTER 1: THE CREATION OF CAESAR'S BATTLE NARRATIVES

This chapter illustrates that Caesar develops the source material of his battles into narratives that place style and reception over the details of the historical victory. While Caesar holds himself forth as a source on the battles in the *Bellum Gallicum*, it is important to note that this does not translate to any requirement for a full and accurate description of battle. Caesar is highly selective regarding his choice of information included, and does not seem to be confined by any requirement to relate consistent and comprehensive battle reports, or to provide a manual on combat. As White notes “Every narrative, however seemingly ‘full’ is constructed on the basis of a set of events that might have been included but were left out.”<sup>1</sup> For Caesar, the set of events chosen, including contextual information and the content of the combat narratives are not simply records of events nor just an attempt to clarify the historical victories. They even exclude information that would be relevant to an understanding of the historical battle, as they are not an elaborate combat report, but a fully developed narrative more concerned with literary criteria than clarity regarding the original event.<sup>2</sup>

The extent to which Caesar's narratives digress from a reconstruction of battle is evident in the information provided to create or develop impressions for the audience. For example, Caesar shows varying levels of narrator omniscience prior to the battle against the Helvetii, and there is a measured inclusion of contextual information in the Sabis River account, both techniques used to create tension in the narrative.<sup>3</sup> The confrontation with a Belgic confederation in Book Two also illustrates the pervasiveness of style as the narrative is fundamentally determined by the topos of the

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<sup>1</sup> White (1987) p. 10. See also Weinryb (1988) p. 269 who notes that while text is linear in nature and can only recall one event at a time, the crucial aspect is how those are narrated if not in chronological order. See also p. 270 where it is noted that historical text no less than the literary deviates from chronological order and “plays with time”.

<sup>2</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 173 for options for battle reporting and Keegan (1976) p. 16. See also Campbell (1987) on some of the problems of military manuals. While Campbell's focus is on the imperial period, there are useful observations on the problematic status of manuals overall. See also generally Richter (1977).

<sup>3</sup> 1.11-1.29, 2.15-2.29.

enemy horde.<sup>4</sup> The influence of narrative style is also evident when Caesar's character is absent from the events described, and his opportunity for self-promotion of his own achievements limited. This is the case in the account of the battle of Octodurus, fought by the subordinate Servius Galba, an episode in which Caesar uses a style of narration that captures the perspective not only of the Roman commander, but the enemy and their plans.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to a clear or consistent military methodology, stylistic determinants of battle are highly visible in the work, even where these conflict with a clear account of historical circumstances. The extent to which they determine the nature of the battle narrative and the level of military information presented is indicative of how far Caesar's narratives are from a battle report or a simple record of the victories.

### **Battle Narrative vs. Battle Report**

Writing on war does not necessarily indicate a desire to accurately and comprehensively reconstruct the conditions of battle, and Caesar is not confined by the requirement for a full or accurate account of historical events. Virgil can appeal to the muses for his epic on warfare, and the context in which his battles are written, as his martial topic is not designed to be a historical reconstruction of battle.<sup>6</sup> Similarly in epic, Naevius may state his military experience in the *Bellum Punicum* precisely to add authority to his narrative voice, rather than as recognition of any reconstructive motive.<sup>7</sup> Even in history, Livy's preface establishes that his authority is inexorably tied with a moral agenda, rather than a descriptive methodology regarding battle.<sup>8</sup> Livy's presentation of historical events, even the battle of Cannae, includes information designed to examine personal characteristics, such as those of Roman commanders present.<sup>9</sup> As Oakley states, several episodes are shaped so as to reveal particular moral qualities, for instance to show the *pietas*, *clementia* and *disciplina* of

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<sup>4</sup> 2.1-2.12.

<sup>5</sup> 3.1-3.6.

<sup>6</sup> See *Aeneid* 1.1-4.

<sup>7</sup> Ash (2002) p. 254. Naevius, according to Aulus Gellius *NA* 17.21.45.

<sup>8</sup> See Livy *Praef* 10. See also Moles (1993) for an overall examination of Livy's preface. See Oakley (1997) pp. 114-117 on the moralising element.

<sup>9</sup> See Livy 7.9.6-7.10.14. Walsh (1963) at pp. 98-99 notes how Livy applies moral criteria to Scipio's generalship, i.e. energy and hard work. See Livy 26.51, 22.22. On Cannae see Chaplin pp. 53-54.



Manlius Torquatus.<sup>10</sup> It is therefore important to note that martial subjects do not necessarily indicate a desire to reconstruct the minutiae of historical battle.

Similarly, a description of battle in the *Bellum Gallicum* does not automatically mean a *prima facie* desire to comprehensively describe or reconstruct the historical event. Historical recollection is the presumed motive in early 20th Century scholarship and even some recent work on battle.<sup>11</sup> Lendon and Kagan in particular regard the battles as an attempt to record the historical victory, Lendon stating “Caesar’s descriptions attempt to reduce the chaos of reality to understandable narratives” and Kagan arguing that “The commander-narrator’s perception of battle....rather than historiographical conventions shape Caesar’s accounts of his own activities.”<sup>12</sup> In both cases, the assumption is that the objective of the narrative is primarily to record the course of the battle or its result. However Caesar does not explicitly state whether his primary purpose is a full and accurate reconstruction of battle in his introduction, which concentrates on Gaul overall rather than the military preparations for the first campaign, and even the information he provides relates only generally to the peoples who will be faced and the location of the campaigns.<sup>13</sup> While this ostensibly describes the theatre of operations, it still does not take into account any variations in objectives regarding individual campaigns, and in fact makes no mention of battle.<sup>14</sup> The objective of reconstructing battle should not be automatically assumed, as the focus of the introduction is only on the general context of Gaul as a whole.

Caesar’s relationship to Roman military reporting also makes the assumption that he is providing a complete reconstructive account problematic. Military manuals, while in use during the late republican period, do not seem to have had the popular appeal of

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<sup>10</sup> See Oakley (1997) pp. 115-116.

<sup>11</sup> Bishop and Coulston (1993) p. 42 state that works like Frontinus’ and Caesar’s are primarily intended as literature. See also Hall (1998) p. 31. fn. 46, who notes the views of early 20th Century scholars such as Klotz (1910) and Norden (1923) on the *commentarii* as reports.

<sup>12</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 277, Kagan (2006) p. 114.

<sup>13</sup> 1.1. Note how the level of information provided is very general, such as the relative martial strength of the Belgae compared to other Gauls. Even this could indicate a moral purpose; something noted by Jervis (2001) pp. 61-75. See Kraus (2009) pp. 160-163 on the idea that there is not even a title to the work. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 59 on the ethnographic and geographic scope of the introduction. Schadee (2008) p. 160 notes the vagueness of the introduction.

<sup>14</sup> Note how at 1.2-1.4 the text describes Orgetorix and the background to the Helvetian migration, and does not provide any Gallic fighting techniques or other information that might indicate an objective of contextualising battle narrative in the forthcoming books.

actual battle experience.<sup>15</sup> Campbell notes that where military manuals are mentioned in the sources they tend to be viewed as of less value than practical experience, and it is unclear where Caesar stood on such issues with regard to military writing.<sup>16</sup> This is apparent in Sallust, who states that Marius learned from battle not reading, and in Cicero who makes a similar observation about Pompey.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the detail that might be included in a military manual does not suggest they would be similar to Caesar's accounts of battle, as illustrated by Frontinus' short sections that indicate various principles at play in the battles he examines.<sup>18</sup> Frontinus' account of Caesar's stratagem at the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp is illustrative of the contrast between narrative and military summary:

C. Caesar in Gallia, deletis ab Ambiorige Titurii Sabini et Cottae legatorum copiis, cum a Q. Cicerone, qui et ipse oppugnabatur, certior factus cum duabus legionibus adventaret, conversis hostibus metum simulavit militesque in castris, quae artiora solito industria fecerat, tenuit. Galli praesumpta iam victoria velut ad praedam castrorum tendentes fossas implere et vallum detrahare coeperunt: qua re proelio non aptatos Caesar emissio repente undique milite trucidavit.<sup>19</sup>

This account provides the essential details to understand the military victory. The location and temporal context are provided, along with the exemplary deed that illustrates Caesar's stratagem. This is substantially shorter than Caesar's account of the whole affair, which extends for over twelve chapters.<sup>20</sup> While the objectives of Caesar's version is discussed in Chapters Four and Five, it is sufficient to note at this point that the difference in length illustrates the substantial divide between Caesar's

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<sup>15</sup> Rambaud (1966) pp. 19-23 nevertheless notes that Caesar may have made use of military reporting styles for persuasive effect.

<sup>16</sup> See Campbell (1987) p. 21. While Cicero *pro Balbo* 47 cf. Sallust *Bell Jug* 85 12-14 states the idea that someone reading Marius' actual campaigns could obtain a detailed knowledge of the rules of war, Cicero may not be the best source on military matters due to his own lack of an exemplary military background. Also Cicero in *pro M Fonteio* 42-3 complains about the lack of practical experience. Such flexibility by Cicero compounds the problematic status of manuals. See also Cicero *Prov Cons* where he does not discuss battle.

<sup>17</sup> *Jug* 85.7-14. See also Cicero *De Imp Cn Pomp* 27-28 on the importance of military experience and the idea that Pompey was concerned with practical experience not book learning. See Kraus (2009) p. 161.

<sup>18</sup> See for example Frontinus *Strategmata* 2.1.16, 2.3.18, 2.5.20, 2.6.3, 3.17.6-7, 4.5.11, 4.7.1.

<sup>19</sup> Frontinus 3.17.6.

<sup>20</sup> This includes the siege itself which is described at 5.38-5.51.

account of the historical event, and at least one surviving source on military principles.

Even the evidence for *commentarii*, with which Caesar's works are generally associated, suggests that they were not constructed as comprehensively as the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>21</sup> The possible exception, Cicero's purported commentary on his own campaign, was clearly not designed to be a military report, as suggested by his desire to celebrate his victories through the proposed work.<sup>22</sup> What evidence survives does not suggest that the battle narratives of Caesar can, or should be easily matched to ideas of military reporting, and there is a lack of evidence to suggest they should be viewed as an ostensibly simple record of historical events.

In addition, the extent to which the audience would have read the works as a military manual is also unclear, due to uncertainty over whether they were concerned with such matters. Rosenstein in particular notes that men of Cicero's generation often had little experience of war.<sup>23</sup> Even though Lendon recognises martial psychological factors in the narrative that informs Caesar's understanding of battle, this does not necessarily imply that there is a reconstructive motive to a passage or that he intended his audience to focus on issues of causality.<sup>24</sup> There is not enough evidence of how far Caesar is addressing military reporting criteria in the *commentarii*; even if it was likely he had read reports or treatises himself.<sup>25</sup> Therefore the status of these *commentarii* as military manuals must be viewed with suspicion, in the absence of

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<sup>21</sup> See pp. 27-28 above.

<sup>22</sup> See Cicero *ad Attic* 1.19.10, 2.1.1-2.1.2, *ad Fam* 5.12.10 on his own *commentarius*. Those memoirs that might have shed some more light on Caesar's work have not survived, such as the lost commentary of Sulla.

<sup>23</sup> See Rosenstein, (2006) p. 378. The requirement for ten years public service for office had been abandoned by this point. Wiseman (1998) pp. 1-9 postulates a primarily military audience. Even if so, how far they read the work as a military manual is unclear.

<sup>24</sup> Lendon (1999). At p. 296 Lendon (1999) praises Caesar's attention to psychology and at p. 301 notes that some landscape is included for psychological effects on morale i.e. 7.19, 7.29. Lendon (1999) p. 274 examines "the mechanics of battle description" and at p. 277 states how a classical historian must choose information, however this seems to rely on an implicit assumption that the objective is the description of the original event. Lendon (1999) p. 284 also notes of Polybius 5.21.3, 12.25.3 that the duty of a historian is to report topography, the physical deployments, formations and evolutions, all features of battle that this thesis illustrates are used to meet authorial objectives.

<sup>25</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 133, 202 on the lack of other *commentarii* or reports to compare with. While Caesar at *Bellum Civile* 1.72 notes that the role of a general is to conquer by *consilia* no less than by sword, this does not necessarily imply the use of manuals. See also Bömer (1953) p. 250 on the unprecedented nature of Caesar's *commentarii* and p. 210 on the use of a military reporting format.

contemporary information to suggest they are designed or desired to be viewed as such.

More importantly, the full and accurate description of battle was not necessarily the means by which Caesar intended to promote himself in the commentaries. As Riggsby notes, much of Roman expectation was in regards to the general's conduct, not the minutiae of battle.<sup>26</sup> In Caesar's case his rival was Pompey, whose reputation was founded on actual victories, and as Welch notes, the *Bellum Gallicum* was most likely an answer to such a reputation.<sup>27</sup> While winning a battle was critical to many campaigns, the purpose of such accounts in the *Bellum Gallicum* is more likely to be predicated on the implications behind victory, such as the reputation that Caesar sought as great commander.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, while the victories are an implicit affirmation of his overall military expertise, his reputation, as enunciated in the work also depends on the presentation of himself, whether that is attributes as identified by Ramage, or other objectives such as an identification with Rome.<sup>29</sup> Any analysis should consider that the accounts are based on the overall impression Caesar is attempting to transmit, and this could take precedence over the details of the battles themselves, which by the time of writing had already been won.

Caesar promotes himself through the content of his work, but care is also required when associating this purely with the representation of battle, as he establishes his knowledge of matters through various methods that are not battle. This is evident in the details of bridge building, or the ethnographic excursus of Book Six, in which he provides an extensive detail of Gallic customs.<sup>30</sup> He makes direct statements on various topics, such as the garrulous or fickle nature of the Gauls, and includes

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<sup>26</sup> Riggsby (2006) pp. 203-204.

<sup>27</sup> Welch (1998) pp. 85-86. See Cicero's speech *De Imperio Cn Pompei* 10-17. See also Ramage (2003) p. 376, Riggsby (2006) p. 205. Note also that Theophanes of Mytilene is known to have been preparing a *res gestae* of Pompey in 62 BCE. See Cicero *Arch* 24 cited in Hall (1998) p. 40. fn. 180. Hall at p. 29 notes that Pompey in turn was influenced by the representation of Alexander.

<sup>28</sup> See Ramage (2003) pp. 364, 367. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 134-135 who notes the wide range of author types for *commentarii*, suggesting the description of battle and *commentarii* were not automatically equated with each other. See also Hall (1998) pp. 26-27 on the political implications of the *Bellum Gallicum* based on the use of Latin.

<sup>29</sup> See Ramage (2002) pp. 132-138. See Mannetter (1995) p.196. On the narrator as military expert see Grillo (2011) pp. 253-259.

<sup>30</sup> 4.17-4.18, 6.11-6.28. Goldsworthy (2007) p. 101 notes regarding the information on the Rhine bridge, that the expedition did not involve serious fighting, but Caesar includes it apparently to "interest and impress his audience". In regards to the customs of the Gauls see in general Riggsby (2006) pp. 47-72, Jervis (2001).

incidental details such as the manner in which they accost travellers for news, information that has only a marginal relationship to battle.<sup>31</sup> In addition, Cicero's criteria for judging the work do not seem to be based on the comprehensiveness of the military detail, and in fact may only be in praise of the stylistic aspects of the work.<sup>32</sup> As Whitby notes, even if Caesar's audience were interested in the reasons for victory, he may have decided at particular times that other matters were of greater interest to them.<sup>33</sup> As a result, the narrator's place as a source on the activity of the *Bellum Gallicum* does not necessarily imply that he would be obliged to provide a full account of battle, as conflict is only one of the tools available in the body of the work. It is highly probable that the work is not designed simply as a record of military achievement through the reconstruction of historical battle in the text.

### Selection of Contextual Information

Battles have a decisive quality and the confrontations are therefore important for the resolution of particular campaigns, but this is not necessarily the reason that Caesar includes his content.<sup>34</sup> Goldsworthy regards victory as a criterion for inclusion in the narrative, stating that Caesar wrote to promote his own career and gain more opportunities for glory, and that he brushed over actions that "achieved little".<sup>35</sup> This assumes that the criteria for narration are largely based on the significance of the event, rather than any authorial objective or interpretation. Certainly, the idea that victory could be a determinant is supported by the Alesia narrative, which is one of the longest passages in the work and as shown brings about a resolution to the war.<sup>36</sup> Even the battle of the Sabis River involves a resolution, as Caesar claims it brought

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<sup>31</sup> See 4.5.

<sup>32</sup> See Suetonius *Div Iul* 55, Cicero *Brut* 262. Such a reputation may of course have been Caesar's objective when writing and his reputation as commander probably only a part of what he wanted to achieve.

<sup>33</sup> Whitby (2007) p. 81. Mannetter (1995) p. 194 states that for ancient historians the fight itself was the "most dispensable part of the narrative".

<sup>34</sup> Many narratives are based on historical events that resolved the campaigns, at least according to Caesar. However Caesar selects particular events for extended narratives based on literary interpretation of the historical victory. For example, see Melchior (2004) p. 18 on resolution as part of a revenge cycle.

<sup>35</sup> See Goldsworthy (2006) pp. 187, 190, 280. On the uncritical use of sources see Wheeler (2001) p. 171 who cites Goldsworthy (1996) pp. 117-118.

<sup>36</sup> See 7.69-7.88. Note that the continuing warfare of Book Eight suggests that the Alesia campaign was not as decisive as portrayed by Caesar.

about the destruction of the Nervii.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, victory is not always the criterion for an extended narrative, and the battle of Gergovia represents a major defeat in which the length of the passage demonstrates that not all battles are chosen for their successful resolution.<sup>38</sup> A minor encounter in Britain against chariots is similarly given significant detail, in order to support Caesar's failure to prosecute the overall campaign.<sup>39</sup> Other battles that involve success, such as the defeat of the Tigurini are only allocated a small section of text, showing that Caesar does not simply use victory to determine length and detail of battle.<sup>40</sup> Such choices regarding the details of a passage are illustrative of the idea that Caesar's narratives are not only providing an account of events significant for their military success.

The idea that the battles are more than just a record of favourable historical events is also evident as Caesar appears highly selective in his choice of battles and the contextual information provided, particularly in the Rhone confrontation.<sup>41</sup> Gilliver makes a statement about ancient battle that is contradicted by this account:

The big set piece description seems to have been almost a requirement for any writer of Roman history...and certain information was expected. The size of the armies, the dispositions, the speeches of the generals, the engagement, flight and casualty figures were all part of the description, though length and emphasis might vary considerably.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast to Gilliver's assertion, Caesar does not appear to confine himself by the need to create large set piece battle narratives based on their historical importance, nor does he always include information that would clarify the historical context, such as the scope, size and historical importance of a battle.<sup>43</sup> The defence of the Rhone in particular indicates that narrative length is not dependent on the size, scope or number

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<sup>37</sup> 2.18-2.28. Conley (1983) p. 177 notes that the Sabis was recounted in as much detail as Alesia.

<sup>38</sup> 7.36-53. See Kraus (2009) p. 172. Also see 5.26-5.37 for another major defeat.

<sup>39</sup> See pp. 286-288 below.

<sup>40</sup> See pp. 113-116 below for a discussion of the meaning attributed to the Arar account and the defeat of the Tigurini.

<sup>41</sup> See Kraus (2009) pp. 165, 171-172. At p. 165 Kraus notes how Caesar reduces the complexities of war to create a coherent, plausible, literary representation of experience.

<sup>42</sup> Gilliver (2007) p. 89.

<sup>43</sup> See the Rhone confrontation below pp. 47-48.

of combatants in a confrontation.<sup>44</sup> The encounter at the Rhone is described in Book One, and is given little detail in spite of the importance of the undertaking and its overall success, nor the effort involved and the strength of the enemy forces.<sup>45</sup> Caesar describes how his army constructed a sixteen foot high wall that was nineteen miles long, and included a ditch, an overall impressive structure, and larger than the eleven mile circumference of fortifications that he states surrounded Alesia.<sup>46</sup> Similarly the number of Helvetians involved may have been substantial, as in the account the migrating people attempt to cross the river as a single entity.<sup>47</sup> Importantly, Caesar's defence forces the Helvetii to change their course, thereby preventing them from their original objective of entering the Roman province.<sup>48</sup> The narrator's brevity in this regard indicates that he does not consider the matter worthy of an extended battle narrative in spite of the size and importance of the defensive endeavour.

In addition, Caesar does not appear to be influenced by the complexity of the Rhone crossing, and the opportunity to describe an interesting or technical narrative is absent from this and other potentially complex battles.<sup>49</sup> The extent to which he abbreviates combat is evident in the description: *...nonnumquam interdiu, saepius noctu si perrumpere possent conati, operis munitione et militum concursu et telis repulsi hoc conatu destiterunt.*<sup>50</sup> The raw material of a complex battle narrative is apparent here as the statement indicates the fighting went on for some time, and includes details of the defence that could have been developed significantly further.<sup>51</sup> Such selectivity is also apparent in the Arar River account, which includes many elements that could be

<sup>44</sup> 1.8. The defeat of the Tigurini at 1.12 is covered in one chapter, whereas the Sabis River narrative at 2.18-2.28 is over eleven chapters in length. In the case of the Sabis River narrative there are several objectives that help to explain the length, beyond the simple objective of capturing more details of the combat. See pp. 66-71, 192-204, 222-238 below for the various objectives of the passage.

<sup>45</sup> 1.8. Caesar successfully holds off the Helvetii, but simply states *hoc conatu destiterunt* in closing the account at 1.8.4. The scope of the Rhone confrontation, as Caesar describes it, was not enough to warrant an extended account. This is in spite of the river location, a geographic point of interest that is a feature of battle in extended narratives such as the battle against the Nervii, see 2.18-2.19, and the Belgae 2.10. Note that even revenge is not always a reason for an extended narrative. See 1.12, 7.11.

<sup>46</sup> See 7.69.

<sup>47</sup> On the problem of numbers see Richter (1977) pp. 156-158. Caesar gives the total numbers later at 1.29. While the accuracy of such numbers is problematic from a historical perspective, they are the numbers he states. In terms of the narrative, Caesar is presenting the enemy as a huge host yet does not afford them an extended battle narrative at this point in the text.

<sup>48</sup> 1.8.4. See recently Walser (1995) on possible geographic issues in the account.

<sup>49</sup> See also 4.14, 5.9. These are short accounts that involve potentially complex circumstances, such as a camp and river.

<sup>50</sup> 1.8.4.

<sup>51</sup> See also 1.10.4-1.10.5, 3.1.4 for other examples.

made into an extended narrative, with a river crossing, and an unusual time for the Roman advance, however Caesar only devotes a single chapter to that battle.<sup>52</sup> As Mannetter notes, “Caesar is not attempting to set down details of battle exactly as happened nor is he writing a technical manual for later generals”.<sup>53</sup> The brevity of these accounts in spite of the source material supports the idea that battle narratives are not necessarily selected for the complexity and detail of the original event.

Within other battle narratives Caesar is similarly selective, and in particular does not appear to show a concern to clarify numbers for his audience, suggesting battle is not structured in terms of its complete historical context.<sup>54</sup> The reason for Caesar’s numeric selectivity is examined further in Chapter Two, but it is important to note that his style is in marked contrast to historical sources like Livy and Polybius, who in spite of not being witnesses to earlier battles make an attempt to give numbers before some major narratives.<sup>55</sup> While Caesar recognises the importance of numeric superiority in battle, in the description of the campaign against the Helvetii, important information is held in abeyance, and he only reveals pertinent details after the account of the fighting itself.<sup>56</sup> In the early discussions of the Helvetian campaign he uses non-numeric details to describe the enemy, simply describing them as a multitude too big

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<sup>52</sup> See 1.12. Note also how this confrontation eliminates a quarter of Helvetii, according to Caesar, illustrating how the scope of victory claimed is not necessarily a prerequisite for an extended narrative. See also Kraus (2010) p. 44. Kraus notes Caesar’s selectivity in Book Seven where there is an emphasis on three sieges that minimise the importance of a cavalry battle that forces Vercingetorix to Alesia.

<sup>53</sup> Mannetter (1995) p. 196.

<sup>54</sup> Richter (1977) pp. 156-158. See also Scheidel (1996) for a general discussion of conventions in numbering. While Scheidel examines economic numbers, it is important to note that numbers in sources are not necessarily included for purely empirical purposes.

<sup>55</sup> On the importance of the size of forces see Polybius 3.33.17. This is certainly not the case in every account, particularly Livy’s early books. However, the major battles of the Second Punic War afford an opportunity to examine what these historians are capable of. See Polybius 3.35, 3.60 for clarification of Hannibal’s forces, 3.72 for Trebia, 3.113-114 for Cannae. See Livy 21.55.2-21.55.4 for Trebia, 22.46 for Cannae, noting that his numbers for Cannae are less clear for the Roman side, even though he attempts to define the array. The use of numbers by Caesar is addressed in the individual case studies, but even this level of clarity regarding numbers and dispositions is rarely present, even in the catalogues which are discussed in their relevant narratives.

<sup>56</sup> See 1.29. See also 1.52.6-1.52.7 and 2.8.1-2.8.3 for Caesar’s recognition of numerical superiority as important. See also the naval battle against the Venetii at 3.14.2-3.14.3. In this account, only the numbers of enemy ships are given, as the objective is to reiterate enemy naval strength. See pp. 126-145 below. Where Caesar does provide numeric factors, they are often delivered in a different part of the narrative, for example a figure for the Nervii is given at 2.4, and it must be assumed that this is the number fielded at the Sabis River at 2.19-2.29. See also 7.67-7.38 where Caesar does not state numbers, and only clarifies afterwards that 3,000 enemy were killed in retreat, probably to show the success of the pursuit.



for their lands.<sup>57</sup> As he knew the numbers in this campaign at the time of writing, his silence before the battle is not through a lack of source information. Furthermore, when Caesar describes the Tigurini, he indicates that they represent a quarter of the total numbers of Helvetii, even though such figures have no original reference to be compared to.<sup>58</sup> The absence of numeric context in the introduction of these tribes suggests that he is disinterested in clarification of empirical odds for his audience, and that a full descriptive report is not his aim.

The figures revealed in the Helvetii account provide an example of the approach to numbers, and its problematic nature in terms of clarification. As Caesar states of the Helvetii after the battle:

In castris Helvetiorum tabulae repertae sunt litteris Graecis confectae et ad Caesarem relatae, quibus in tabulis nominatim ratio confecta erat, qui numerus domo exisset eorum qui arma ferre possent, et item separatim pueri, senes mulieresque. quarum omnium rerum summa erat capitum Helvetiorum milia ducenta sexaginta tria, Tulingorum milia XXXVI, Latobrigorum XIII, Rauracorum XXIII, Boiorum XXXII; ex his qui arma ferre possent ad milia nonaginta duo. summa omnium fuerunt ad milia trecenta sexaginta octo. eorum qui domum redierunt, censu habito ut Caesar imperaverat, repertus est numerus milium centum et decem.<sup>59</sup>

As the discovery of the census illustrates, the information is revealed according to the internal flow of the narrative, so that the audience has no idea of the actual numbers involved until the end when the camp is taken.<sup>60</sup> Just as important to note is that even within the census, the numbers of fighting men are not clarified, the only number mentioned throughout the account being the 15,000 Boii who turned up part way through the battle, and a mention of the surviving forces afterwards.<sup>61</sup> There is a lack

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<sup>57</sup> 1.2.5.

<sup>58</sup> See 1.12.4-1.12.5.

<sup>59</sup> 1.29.1-1.29.3.

<sup>60</sup> See also the Usipetes and Tencteri account at pp. 297-318 below.

<sup>61</sup> 1.26.5. Caesar notes that 130,000 survived the battle. See also the Octodurus account where an estimate of numbers is provided after the battle p. 109 below. This is not always the case, and numbers are sometimes given before the battle, such as at 1.4 in the list of the Belgae, and the catalogue of enemy forces at Alesia at 7.75. Note however in each case that Caesar does not list

of clarity regarding combatant numbers that illustrates that Caesar does not appear constrained to provide a full account of the numeric strength of forces for his audience.

In the first battle against the Germani, it is also apparent that the narrative is not driven by the need to establish clear numerical odds. Prior to and during the battle Caesar does not describe the numbers of Germani.<sup>62</sup> If the audience requires numerical context, they must recall an earlier passage in which the numbers are reported by Gallic allies:

Horum primo circiter milia XV Rhenum transisse; posteaquam agros et cultum et copias Gallorum homines feri ac barbari adamassent, traductos plures; nunc esse in Gallia ad centum et viginti milium numerum.<sup>63</sup>

While Caesar states numbers, he later reports that 24,000 of the Harudes have recently joined Ariovistus, with no indication if these are additional, or included in the original figure.<sup>64</sup> It is not even clear if the 120,000 are a fighting force or the entire population. While it might be assumed to be a whole population as they appear to be settled, the lack of clarity suggests Caesar is not concerned to contextualise the fighting strength for the upcoming battle narrative. There is no assessment of the fighting strength of these forces on the day of battle, particularly numbers of combatants.<sup>65</sup> By not clarifying the numerical data, Caesar demonstrates that he does not wish to communicate empirical information critical to understanding the odds.<sup>66</sup> In this regard, information is not provided in proximity or with reference to the battle as the purpose is not to clarify the circumstances of the confrontation.

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Roman forces, and both lists are only of those promised to the battle. See pp. 71-88 and pp. 260-276 on these battles. For another numeric issue see pp. 169-176 on the numbers in the siege of Aduatuca.

<sup>62</sup> 1.31-1.53. See pp. 146-161 below. The Germanic battle is described in terms of competing *virtus*, the array of battle features details designed to show Roman superiority in this quality, and exact numbers are therefore not essential to the passage.

<sup>63</sup> 1.31.5-1.31.6. Numeric reporting by Gallic allies is in itself problematic, due to Caesar's comments about their unreliability at 4.5.3.

<sup>64</sup> 1.31.10-1.31.11.

<sup>65</sup> Caesar only gives tribal names at 1.51.2.

<sup>66</sup> Such information could generally show Caesar's diligence as commander and his attention to detail, however they often have more specific purposes, such as the number of Venetii ships addressed below at pp. 135-136.

Such inconsistency regarding enemy forces is most evident in the description of the Nervii, and their problematic presence in Book Five after the defeat of Book Two.<sup>67</sup> The casualties of the Nervii are described as horrendous, and it is hard to imagine how they could recover when almost all the men were said to be killed.<sup>68</sup> Caesar states: *prope ad internecionem gente ac nomine Nerviorum redacto*.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless in Book Five the Nervii return as protagonists, and he describes that they and their allies launch an attack on Cicero's camp.<sup>70</sup> While this problem could be due to several reasons, the absence of an explanation for this apparent inconsistency suggests he may not feel bound by exactitude regarding the protagonists.<sup>71</sup>

One striking feature in the narratives is that topography and the location of battle are not always contextualised in order to assist audience understanding. Pelling notes the paucity of information in Caesar in regards to locations and distances, suggesting a lack of concern with geographic precision overall.<sup>72</sup> This is particularly true of battle as in the account of Ariovistus and the Germani in Book One; Caesar provides no consistent references to distance or geography even when these may be relevant.<sup>73</sup> Similarly with regard to locations, several towns in Book Two are named, even where no battle occurs, such as the town of Noviodunum, and Bratuspantium, both of which fall without combat.<sup>74</sup> By contrast the town of the Aduatuci, where combat does occur, is not named at the start of the account.<sup>75</sup> For Kagan terrain is "written to convey only the salient features of terrain that a reader would need to understand the

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<sup>67</sup> See 2.28.2-2.28.3. See 5.38-5.52 for when the Nervii return. See Riggsby (2006) p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> See pp. 203-204 below. The information provided establishes the extent to which the Nervii adhere to their code of behaviour in combat. The apparent inconsistency is in part explained as Caesar's purpose is primarily that of addressing the representation of the enemy, rather than the physical circumstances of their destruction.

<sup>69</sup> 2.28.1.

<sup>70</sup> Note also that if they are the same Nervii, the tribes that are mentioned at 5.38-5.39 do not feature in Book Two. Jervis (2001) p. 88 notes that the Nervii flee quickly at siege in Book Five, suggesting that Caesar is not concerned to show their *virtus* consistently.

<sup>71</sup> See Wiseman (1998) p. 2.

<sup>72</sup> Pelling (1981) pp. 741, 751.

<sup>73</sup> Pelling (1981) p. 751 notes Caesar's "penchant" for "geographical vagueness and simplification" for his audience. See Chapter Five pp. 23-24, on the use of the Rhine in the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri. On weather and distances, see also pp. 252-253 below.

<sup>74</sup> See 2.12, 2.13. Note that siege weapons are deployed at Noviodunum. However Bratuspantium falls without any military preparation. Note how the narrative does feature some of the tropes of sieges such as the presence of women, children and town elders though, suggesting Caesar wishes to associate the surrender with siege narrative ideas. On tropes see Paul (1982) p. 149.

<sup>75</sup> See 2.29-2.33.

battle”.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, the vague nature of Caesar’s terrain descriptions can create confusion regarding the battlefield circumstances. This is evident in the Belgae confrontation in Book Two, as Caesar withholds mention of the marsh that lies between the armies, reserving the detail until later in the passage.<sup>77</sup> These omissions indicate an inconsistency between topography, location and battle narrative, which suggests that contextualising the location is not the primary objective.

Furthermore Caesar is inconsistent regarding the verification of information, indicating that there is no rigid standard regarding the reporting of military activity. As narrator of the work, Caesar is the main source of much information regarding his own activity.<sup>78</sup> However when he reports activity that happened outside his personal presence, he sometimes explains his sources, such as in the massacre of Titurius Sabinus and Aurunculeius Cotta, which appears pieced together from the story of survivors or prisoners, and elsewhere he similarly states his interrogation of prisoners or intelligence gathering.<sup>79</sup> In the introduction to the Nervii, in which Caesar asks a question and receives an answer in indirect speech, he ensures through contextualisation that the information appears specific and logical according to the nature of the conversation, and what would be expected of the participants at this point.<sup>80</sup> This adds veracity to the information given and imbues his representation with this authenticity.<sup>81</sup> However, such information is not always forthcoming, and the inconsistency regarding sources is apparent in the battle against the Belgae in Book Two.<sup>82</sup> While sources of knowledge appear before the battle, whether it is the letters of Labienus, conversations with the Remi or the various messengers and letters that travel back and forth, such detail is less evident for parts of the battle.<sup>83</sup> The source of knowledge for the Belgic plans, such as the abandonment of the siege of

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<sup>76</sup> See Kagan (2006) p. 16.

<sup>77</sup> For the marsh see 2.9.1. Note how the marsh comes after a description of the cavalry skirmish, and even after the fortifications, indicating how Caesar gives precedence to his activity, then terrain.

<sup>78</sup> On the omnipresent narrator see Grillo (2011) pp. 244-249.

<sup>79</sup> For the activity of Book Five see 5.46.1 on messengers, 5.48, 2.1, 5.52 on prisoners. However, for a contrast see 4.30 discussed at pp. 283-284 below where no sources are mentioned, in order to give logistical problems an element of certainty. See Bertrand (1997) p. 111 on intelligence in general.

<sup>80</sup> 2.15.3-2.15.6. See Nordling (1991) p. 37 on *inventio*. See also 1.29 for the Helvetian census as an example of source verification.

<sup>81</sup> For the Remi see also 2.4.1-2.4.10. See also 1.29, 1.31 for further examples.

<sup>82</sup> 2.1-2.11.

<sup>83</sup> 2.1.1, 2.4.1, 2.2.1, 2.6.4.

Bibrax, is not stated; it is simply related that they lost hope of taking the town.<sup>84</sup> Their reason for taking on the greater task of facing the main Roman army is not even given.<sup>85</sup> Even when Caesar describes complex motives, such as the reason that the Belgae decided to cross a river, or the meeting held after the failure of that plan, he does not mention whether he found this out through spies, prisoners or in later negotiations.<sup>86</sup> Considering how complex the motives of the Belgae are for turning home, with reasons stacked up in sequence, and with reference to activities elsewhere in the region, his silence on the sources shows the inconsistency of his narrative approach.<sup>87</sup> This methodology illustrates that he is only intermittently interested in establishing the veracity of his sources for battle and the context in which they appear in the work.

### The Selective Reconstruction of Combat

It is not just in contextual elucidation that Caesar is selective, but in the details of combat itself. This lack of reconstructive clarity supports the idea that the narrator's objective is not just a reconstruction of the historical circumstances.<sup>88</sup> By showing that Caesar's accounts are not concerned to comprehensively reconstruct the circumstances of battle, this section further demonstrates that Caesar is not simply creating context and understanding of the historical event for his audience.

Caesar's narrative form appears limited in its ability to record battle in part be due to its complexity, where simplification is unsurprisingly a feature of the account.<sup>89</sup> This

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<sup>84</sup> 2.7.2-2.7.3.

<sup>85</sup> 2.7.3.

<sup>86</sup> 2.9.4-2.9.5, 2.10.4-2.10.5. See also 4.31.1. *At Caesar, etsi nondum eorum consilia cognoverat...* The narrative is designed to indicate how at the time of fighting he was operating with limited knowledge.

<sup>87</sup> See 2.10.4-2.10.5.

<sup>88</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 165, Kagan, (2006) p. 2. As Rambaud (1966) p. 98 states "*L'historien établit des faits en regroupant des indices et rattache les faits entre eux par des relations causales. César, suivant une intention tout opposée, s'efforce souvent de rompre la continuité des événements et d'empêcher cette synthèse de l'historien ou la reconstitution spontanée des lecteurs*". While Rambaud regards this as part of deliberate misrepresentation, the essential difference to a causal approach is applicable to the battle narratives. See also Mannetter (1995) p. 176. No two battle scenes are identically constructed "this is certainly due to literary *variatio*" as well as the fact that no two battles were historically identical. This is in marked contrast to the statement of Kagan (2006) on variable circumstances, at p. 121.

<sup>89</sup> This is addressed in the individual case studies. For example, the movement of cavalry against the Usipetes and Tencteri is omitted, in order to associate them closely with Caesar's order to cut down the women and young boys. See pp. 314-315 below.

is evident in the siege of Aduatuca, in which the description of the town includes details of the one approach, a narrow slope that is heavily defended, however it is not stated that this is where a Roman tower advances, nor is there mention of the defences that are prepared against it, such information only being implied.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore the sacking of the town is omitted once the Aduatuci are driven back from their sally.<sup>91</sup> Such details are critical to an understanding of the physical movement of men on the battlefield, and their absence suggests that Caesar is required by the constraints of a linear narrative to simplify details in the reconstruction of battle.

Even within the narrative Caesar appears to deliberately simplify activity on the battlefield, using generic terms or broad descriptions to capture general concepts that suggest he does not desire a fully reconstructive account. While Kagan states that Caesar's narratives are trying to identify each battle's major events and the relationships among them, Kagan's investigations assume the narrative is an attempt at historical or military clarity, something that is not always apparent.<sup>92</sup> For example in the Octodurus narrative, Caesar is non-specific regarding units involved, and identifying nomenclature is often vague regarding the action.<sup>93</sup> When describing the combat itself, the use of words such as *nostri*, *quaeque* and *alii* are all indicative of the generic nature of identification, and replace any attempt to actually identify cohorts, or places on the battlefield.<sup>94</sup> The summary nature of activity is illustrated as the enemy often act as a single unit, all of them attacking with missiles, or moving according to a single motive.<sup>95</sup> Caesar relies on indefinite terms to describe units, indicating that this type of detail is not essential in the style of narrative he has constructed.

Such an objective is also evident in the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri in Book Four, where the narrative is stripped of many militarily pertinent details and the encounter is reduced to its most simple terms. This is evident in the topography of the battlefield, which omits the complexities of actual combat to create a simplified environment. While Walker believes the terrain is flat and featureless in the region

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<sup>90</sup> 2.29.3. See 2.30 for the attack, which only implies the assault against this location.

<sup>91</sup> 2.33.6-2.33.7.

<sup>92</sup> See Kagan (2006) p. 108.

<sup>93</sup> See 3.4-3.6.

<sup>94</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.4.

<sup>95</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.4. This is a criticism Keegan (1976) pp. 63-64 has of the Sabis River narrative at 2.25.

and that is why Caesar gives no topographical details, flat and featureless is a detail that is in itself important for battle.<sup>96</sup> No topography is mentioned within the battle that would help an audience to understand the locations of the forces, or the type of terrain where it was fought, except the basic concept that the enemy had a camp.<sup>97</sup> While Caesar mentions wagons and baggage, these are not given any sort of positional reference, and no other location information is forthcoming regarding their placement or location.<sup>98</sup> This absence of detailed information is evidence that the battle is not to be regarded as a full reconstruction of the event, as situational information has been summarised in a highly simplified form.

Similarly, Caesar omits much detail regarding the preparation and dispositions for fighting the Usipetes and Tencteri, suggesting that he does not wish to convey the physical circumstances involved in engaging with the enemy. All he states regarding the dispositions on the day is: *acie triplici instituta et celeriter octo milium itinere confecto prius ad hostium castra pervenit*.<sup>99</sup> This basic description of his advance and manoeuvre into array suggests that the journey and the preparation for battle have been conflated for simplicity.<sup>100</sup> The omission of any dispositions apart from the triple line illustrates that the conditions of combat are described in their most fundamental form.

Furthermore when information is provided, it can disappear from the account once it has served its narrative purpose, even when it was likely important to the course of events. This is evident in the Arar River narrative, where in spite of the river location the river does not feature in the battle itself.<sup>101</sup> As Caesar states: *Flumen est Arar, quod per fines Haeduarum et Sequanorum in Rhodanum influit, incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluat iudicari non possit*.<sup>102</sup> The sluggishness of the river and its appearance is only included to explain why the Helvetians cross at this

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<sup>96</sup> See Walker (1921) p.78. Caesar also simplifies terrain in the Octodurus narrative, where many of the details of the village have been omitted and do not feature in the fighting. See pp. 88-111, 150-151 below.

<sup>97</sup> 4.14. Note that the topographical details are incorporated into the description of activity, indicating how they are not being isolated as a descriptive feature.

<sup>98</sup> 4.14.4-4.14.5.

<sup>99</sup> 4.14.1.

<sup>100</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 167-168.

<sup>101</sup> The river is twice named, at 1.12.1 and 1.12.2.

<sup>102</sup> 1.12.1.

location.<sup>103</sup> When he attacks the Tigurini, the river is not mentioned; its value only evident as it separated this tribe from the main host and presented an opportunity for attack.<sup>104</sup> This abandonment of a battlefield feature furthers Kraus' argument that Caesar's use of *flumen* is an example of how "superficially precise text" is useless for actual details.<sup>105</sup> The feature is only described to show his decision making, and Caesar instead describes the flight of the Tigurini to the woods, so that the river does not even figure in the rout.<sup>106</sup> While the river may play a part in explaining his decision to fight the Tigurini, the detail does not appear to be included to help in explaining the battle itself.

Details of battle can be entirely missing from an account. In the confrontation with the Belgae in Book Two, Caesar describes his battlefield fortifications only after the cavalry have engaged in skirmishing, raising the question of what the Belgae are doing while this is going on.<sup>107</sup> The lack of detail is also evident as the number of days over which activity occurs is summarised as *cotidie*, so that the temporal contribution of the cavalry battle and the length of the standoff itself is unclear.<sup>108</sup> More importantly, in the Battle of the Sabis River, whole units disappear from the account. Caesar omits to describe the results of combat fought by the Eighth and Eleventh Legions, which disappear entirely in the closing stages of the battle.<sup>109</sup> While Lendon attributes this to a style of reporting that varies as the account progresses, the omission of their final fate is important as they were engaged in ongoing combat when last described.<sup>110</sup> This omission illustrates the selectivity of combat, and while Lendon regards it as driven by a historical aim, it is nonetheless indicative of a selection process with regard to the reconstruction of combat.

The extent and importance of such selectivity is evident in a study of the first major battle narrative of the *Bellum Gallicum*, fought against the Helvetii near Bibracte,

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<sup>103</sup> See also 1.8 where the depth of the river is used to explain the crossing at that point.

<sup>104</sup> For Caesar's objectives for the passage, see pp. 113-116 below.

<sup>105</sup> Kraus (2005b) p. 243.

<sup>106</sup> 1.12.3-1.12.4. Contrast the enemy who are slain in the river after the defeat of Ariovistus. See also the Usipetes and Tencteri, where Caesar follows these Germani incursions back to the Rhine crossing. See pp. 158-160, 305 below on the resolution of these battles

<sup>107</sup> See 2.8. Caesar also does not explain how it is that his cavalry can function effectively across the marsh in this account.

<sup>108</sup> 2.8.2. See also the Germani battle pp. 148-149 and Quintus Cicero's camp discussed at pp. 239-243.

<sup>109</sup> See pp. 202-203 for a discussion of this omission.

<sup>110</sup> See Lendon (1999) p. 319.



where the techniques and narrative sacrifices are apparent. One major observation of the account is that Caesar reduces missile fire to its simplest terms, so that the narrative only mentions it occurring in one direction. This is evident in both major instances of missile fire in the battle.<sup>111</sup> When he describes in detail a Roman *pila* volley, he makes no mention of return fire and the impact, if any, of Helvetian missile weapons is omitted.<sup>112</sup> This is in spite of the array of *tela*, *matarae* and *tragulae* that he states the Helvetian army carried in its train, with which they are later able to hold off his entire army for an extended period.<sup>113</sup> In this later confrontation, no Roman missile fire is mentioned either, illustrating the singular direction of missile fire.<sup>114</sup> There may be several reasons for this omission, such as the nature of the initial Helvetian attack, or the ineffectiveness of missiles at various times.<sup>115</sup> However the absence of any mention is an example of how the narrator sacrifices particular elements of the battle and a full explanation for the event can only be inferred.

Similarly Caesar omits a large amount of content that could be much more important for the result of battle, illustrating his selective attention to battlefield circumstances. After the initial *pila* volley, the account does not include any missile fire that might have been going on, an omission that has left it to modern historians to surmise the nature of combat in these engagements.<sup>116</sup> Caesar states that after the volley, the *milites* make an attack with drawn swords, forcing the Helvetii from their position and into retreat.<sup>117</sup> He then proceeds to an account of the manoeuvres that both armies undertake, as the Romans follow up the retreating enemy.<sup>118</sup> In all this action no mention is made of any missile fire, or even if the soldiers continue to use swords; whether they fight with swords for the entire seven hour engagement or resort back to

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<sup>111</sup> Contrast Tacitus *Agricola* 36 *ac primo congressu eminus certabatur; simulque constantia, simul arte Britanni ingentibus gladiis et brevibus caetris missilia nostrorum vitare vel excutere, atque ipsi magnam vim telorum superfundere*. There is recognition that both sides use missiles here and that the weapons flew both ways.

<sup>112</sup> See 1.25.1-1.25.5 and also pp. 170-175 below.

<sup>113</sup> 1.26.3-1.26.4.

<sup>114</sup> 1.26.2-1.26.4.

<sup>115</sup> Caesar does not even say that any return fire was ineffective, a detail that is itself important from a military standpoint.

<sup>116</sup> It is possible this is because there was no missile fire, but this is not stated. See Matthews (2010) pp. 68-69 on the use of the *pilum*, which may have been intended to be used only once. See also Zhmodikov (2000) pp. 71-72, and Wheeler (2001) pp. 184, for criticism of Zhmodikov. Kagan (2006) notes the absence of missile fire as well at pp. 140-141.

<sup>117</sup> 1.25.5-1.25.6.

<sup>118</sup> See 1.25.5-1.26.2.

a mix of missile fire after the first attack is not apparent.<sup>119</sup> The change from the details of the *pila* volley and sword use at the start, to a summary of combat is an omission that is the result of Caesar's selective representation of combat.

Caesar only marginally addresses other important aspects of the Helvetian battle, which indicates that he openly sacrifices important descriptive elements in his account. This is apparent as he scarcely mentions the use of cavalry, even when they appear important for the course of affairs.<sup>120</sup> This is evident in the description of the opening of the battle:

Postquam id animum advertit, copias suas Caesar in proximum collem subducit equitatumque, qui sustineret hostium impetum, misit. ipse interim in colle medio triplicem aciem instruxit legionum quattuor veteranarum; in summo iugo duas legiones, quas in Gallia citeriore proxime conscripserat, et omnia auxilia collocari, ac totum montem hominibus compleri et interea sarcinas in unum locum conferri et eum ab his, qui in superiore acie constiterant, muniri iussit. Helvetii cum omnibus suis carris secuti impedimenta in unum locum contulerunt; ipsi confertissima acie reiecto nostro equitatu phalange facta sub primam nostram aciem successerunt.<sup>121</sup>

In this opening passage of the battle, the cavalry are not the subject and are subordinated to the movement of the army onto the hill, even though the sequence of historical action would probably have been the other way around as they were sent to give the army time to form an array. The next and final appearance of the cavalry is equally short, and like the initial description, the sentence construction draws away from an examination of their contribution.<sup>122</sup> In doing this Caesar brushes over an entire section of the battle, at odds with the importance of the cavalry, as through their contribution, he is able to draw up six full legions, the auxiliaries and the baggage. He

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<sup>119</sup> The issue is that Caesar provides no details at all, his emphasis on swords in the initial attack not necessarily indicative of the later fighting, as it may be a simplification to show Roman *virtus* in the initial attack. See pp. 155-158 below for a similar example in the Germanic battle.

<sup>120</sup> This is not necessarily evidence of any bias against auxiliaries, even though the cavalry were mostly Gallic. Note at 1.42, 4.12 Numidians may also have been present, see also 2.10. An allegation of bias does not always fit with how they are presented, as Caesar records when allies perform noteworthy or courageous deeds, even among the cavalry, such as at 4.12. See pp. 311-313 below on the use of Gallic cavalry with Roman characteristics in Book Four. He also shows affection for Gallic subordinates at 1.53. See Ramage (2003) p. 345.

<sup>121</sup> 1.24.1-1.25.5.

<sup>122</sup> They appear in an ablative absolute construction only at 1.24.5 and disappear altogether after this.

is even able to begin fortifying the top of the hill and fight on better terms.<sup>123</sup> This must have taken some time, suggesting that the cavalry contribution was significant, but their role is marginalised within the account.

It is clear that Caesar is not motivated by a concern to describe important military stages in the battle, since the critical point in the battle is only briefly mentioned and many details of combat omitted at this point. The most dangerous point of the battle is when the Boii and Tulingi appear on the Roman flank, as the countermeasures indicate that he may not have expected this beforehand.<sup>124</sup> Nevertheless, in the narrative this crisis is not elaborated on, nor given any detail except that Romans shift their dispositions to meet the threat.<sup>125</sup> In spite of the long duration of the battle, there is no anecdotal information or details to describe how the Romans drive the Helvetii back.<sup>126</sup> Even praise of enemy courage is positioned as an introduction to the final battle around the baggage and not part of this stage.<sup>127</sup> The selectivity in content does not correspond with important stages of combat, indicating that elaboration and the important aspects of battle are not completely synchronous.

As these accounts illustrate battle narrative does not seem governed by the purpose of explaining circumstances surrounding battle or the details of combat itself. The selectivity regarding the context in which the campaigns and their battles appear suggests that Caesar is not just providing details of his historical victories, nor assisting his audience to understand these details. While the victories themselves are apparent through the narrative, the inconsistent attention to clarification of the circumstances suggests only intermittent interest in full elucidation of the source events. Criteria other than self-aggrandisement through a record of success must therefore be considered as the determinant for the battles and their contextual details. The next section therefore examines the creation of the narrative to show that details are instead often provided to address the reception of these passages and Caesar's relationship as author to the audience of the *Bellum Gallicum*.

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<sup>123</sup> 1.24.2-1.24.4.

<sup>124</sup> See 1.25.6-1.25.7.

<sup>125</sup> 1.25.7.

<sup>126</sup> See 1.26.2-1.26.3 for the duration. The action of individual legions evident in the battle of the Sabis River is entirely absent here. See 2.23-2.26.

<sup>127</sup> 1.26.3.

## Caesar the Narrator and Battle

In contrast to the inconsistent approach to reporting the details, there are clear indicators of Caesar's use of the medium of battle in order to create a narrative suitable for conveying his achievements. Kagan dismisses the idea that literary factors are a determinant in Caesar's accounts, stating that "scholars fail to recognize that Caesar conducted his military affairs in the realm of reality and not in that of fiction or rhetoric" further stating that Caesar was not relying on literary models to describe battles but on personal experience.<sup>128</sup> However there is significant evidence to oppose this view, as Hirtius intimates that the commentaries are written to higher literary standards than a simple record of combat when he states: *constat enim inter omnes nihil tam operose ab aliis esse perfectum, quod non horum elegantia commentariorum superetur*.<sup>129</sup> Cicero also read the *commentarii* from a literary perspective, as part of the aristocratic preoccupation with style and quality.<sup>130</sup> While the persuasive effect of this is examined in Chapter Two, it is important for this chapter to understand that information on battle is selected and conveyed in order to address this stylistic dimension of the work.

The idea that Caesar would have an interest in the audience reception of battle is also suggested as Cicero recommended narrating "changes of circumstance and vicissitudes of fortune" which will delight the reader giving rise to "surprise, suspense, joy, pain, hope and fear".<sup>131</sup> Kraus, as noted above, recognises this concern with audience reaction in Caesar, stating that he reduces the complexities of war to create a plausible, literary representation of the experience, thereby indicating that the relationship of author and audience has a fundamental impact on the manner that battle narrative is constructed.<sup>132</sup> This motive is not exceptional, and Syme notes that Sallust's choice of content is sometimes developed at length, such as the Muthul account, and at other times left vague, in part due to the sources, but also to Sallust's technique of "selection and emphasis...omission, abbreviation, or the artistic

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<sup>128</sup> Kagan (2006) pp. 149, 150.

<sup>129</sup> See Hirtius *BG* 8 pr 3-7. Hirtius notes the apparent completeness of the works, and that they are more than the material for others to write history. See 8.4.1-8.5.1.

<sup>130</sup> See Cicero *Brut* 262. See also above in the introduction pp. 28-33.

<sup>131</sup> Cicero *ad Fam* 5.12.4-5.12.5. See also Cicero *ad Fam* 5.12.4-5.12.6 on history, which must be dramatic, entertaining and move the audience to an emotional response.

<sup>132</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 165. See above p. 17.

arrangement of events”.<sup>133</sup> It is therefore also possible that Caesar would have been concerned with the presentation of the work enough to significantly affect his accounts of battle, and that this could be an important determinant of the narrative.

There is an apparent concern with presentation evident in the provision of details used to evoke a reaction from the audience.<sup>134</sup> Caesar uses methods like repetition or selective use of his own recollection, so that contextual information appears in order to further these stylistic aims.<sup>135</sup> This is evident for instance in Book One and Two where the Helvetian campaign, the battle against Ariovistus and the Belgae account all use details to build tension in the narrative.<sup>136</sup> In these instances, information is fundamentally determined by objectives related to Caesar’s creation of the narrative to address his relationship with the audience as examined below.

The evocation of a reaction in the audience is an apparent objective in the battle fought against the Helvetii, in which Caesar selectively recalls affairs in order to show the uncertainty and vulnerability of the Romans to this new enemy. Pitcher notes that this “building up” of an individual or group before they appear is a “recurring and effective tactic” in ancient historiography.<sup>137</sup> Caesar reveals this tactic prior to the battle with the Helvetii, where he is careful to explain the reasons for the enemy offering battle or taking aggressive action, in a manner that appears designed to generate tension:

Helvetii seu quod timore perterritos Romanos discedere a se existimarent, eo magis quod pridie superioribus locis occupatis proelium non commisissent, sive eo quod re frumentaria intercludi posse confiderent, commutato consilio atque itinere converso nostros a novissimo agmine insequi ac lacescere coeperunt.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Syme (1964) pp. 147, 149.

<sup>134</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 172 notes the use of entire battle narratives to build tension and suspense. On audience reaction and the broad association of text with ekphrasis see Webb (2012) pp. 12-13.

<sup>135</sup> On repetition see Williams (1985) p. 224, Riggsby (2006) p. 110. On shifting narrator roles see Grillo (2011) pp. 244-249.

<sup>136</sup> 1.13-1.24, 1.49, 2.1-2.4.

<sup>137</sup> See Pitcher (2007) p. 109. i.e. Livy and Hannibal 21.2.1-21.2.2. See also pp. 170-177 on the representation of the Helvetii.

<sup>138</sup> 1.23.3.

As indicated by the use of *seu* and *sive*, Caesar states he is not sure of their motives. This is in spite of his capture of the Helvetian camp and later negotiations with the same Helvetian leaders.<sup>139</sup> While the uncertainty may have been real at the time of the event, it was probably resolved by the time of writing which must have been after the battle.<sup>140</sup> In contrast to Caesar's lack of knowledge the enemy are placed in a position of strength and know of his own plans, as he states that a deserter provided them with the details, even though he may not have been aware of this at the time.<sup>141</sup> By presenting the possible explanations, and selectively recalling details, information appears so that the uncertainty and tension of the situation is best communicated to the audience.

Incidental details are used to support this impression, showing that information is included in the account when it supports the aim of building tension in the narrative.<sup>142</sup> Caesar evokes an atmosphere of fear, through the examination of the motives of particular participants.<sup>143</sup> This is not only evident when the Helvetians describe the Romans as *timore perterritos*, but it is also addressed through the failure of Considius, who is similarly described as *timore territum*.<sup>144</sup> While some of this portrayal could be due to Considius having a possible connection to Sulla, it is also possible that he is included to invite the audience to consider what caused such fear.<sup>145</sup> While criticised for his action, the shaken character of Considius, and the Helvetian perception of Roman fear illustrates that information reinforces the idea of suspense in the passage.

In the campaign against the Germani in Book One, Caesar also generates such tension through the repetition of empirical data, illustrating that such information may be

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<sup>139</sup> 1.27-1.29. Grillo (2011) p. 250.

<sup>140</sup> This is applicable whether he wrote the chapter during his time in Gaul or sometime afterwards. See the introduction pp. 26-27 on composition. Note that the uncertainty described was probably very real at the time of the event, and Caesar is recording his impressions with chronological consistency. It nevertheless has the effect of placing Caesar the character in a vulnerable position.

<sup>141</sup> 1.23.2-1.23.3.

<sup>142</sup> See also the cavalry engagement at 1.15.1-1.15.4 where a small force of Helvetii routs the Roman cavalry and the numbers supplied show why the enemy is confident.

<sup>143</sup> 1.23.3. He also mentions the very real concern for food supplies that was a primary motive for the Romans to change course at 1.23.1-1.23.2.

<sup>144</sup> 1.23.3, 1.22.4. Manner (1995) p. 112 regards this incident as part of foreshadowing the battle

<sup>145</sup> For examples see also pp. 233-235 below on *Baculus* and pp. 116-123 below on *exempla* at Gergovia. On Sullan connections see Levick (1998) p. 72.

duplicated to achieve an impression in the narrative.<sup>146</sup> In describing the preliminary moves before battle he states how he has a small camp constructed:

Ubi eum castris se tenere Caesar intellexit, ne diutius commeatu prohiberetur, ultra eum locum quo in loco Germani consederant, circiter passus sescentos ab his, castris idoneum locum delegit acieque triplici instructa ad eum locum venit. primam et secundam aciem in armis esse, tertiam castra munire iussit. hic locus ab hoste circiter passus sescentos, uti dictum est, aberat.<sup>147</sup>

Caesar repeats the distance, and coming so close after the first iteration, seems to stress how close this camp is to the enemy, even though he admits that he is repeating the information when he states *uti dictum est*.<sup>148</sup> Nor does the repetition indicate a desire to map the battlefield for the audience, as he actually provides more information in the first statement, where he states that the small camp is beyond the enemy.<sup>149</sup> The use of repetition highlights proximity and danger for the audience, in order to build towards the main battle narrative.<sup>150</sup> Such apparently superfluous writing serves a purpose in terms of reception, and defines a relationship between Caesar and his audience that is primarily concerned with the reception of the passage.

The motivation and objectives of the enemy are also described with certainty where they place the Germani in a position of apparent superiority.<sup>151</sup> This approach is apparent when Caesar states that the Germani move camp:

Postridie eius diei praeter castra Caesaris suas copias traduxit et milibus passuum duobus ultra eum castra fecit eo consilio uti frumento commeatuque, qui ex Sequanis et Haeduis supportaretur, Caesarem intercluderet.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Eden (1962) p. 217 regards this as due to carelessness. Williams (1985) following Richter (1977) p. 149 and Goff (1984) p. 4 has shown the style to be more subtle.

<sup>147</sup> 1.49.1-1.49.3.

<sup>148</sup> 1.49.3.

<sup>149</sup> On repetition see Williams (1985) p. 224, Riggsby (2006) p. 110.

<sup>150</sup> See also p. 66-71 below on the structure of the Sabis River narrative.

<sup>151</sup> Grillo (2011) pp. 253-259 notes the technique in the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>152</sup> 1.48.2-1.48.3.

He shows no doubt here in explaining the motives of Ariovistus, in spite of the likelihood that at the time of the event he did not know the exact reasons.<sup>153</sup> Such activity by Ariovistus might be motivated by a desire to cut supply, but the matter is reported in this case without qualification, as the objective appears to highlight the vulnerability of the Romans.

A different technique appears in the Belgae campaign; however information is still presented selectively so that it builds tension in the narrative. Caesar describes a vast enemy host that is gathering against him, and structures the account to slowly provide more detail and an increasing level of tension as the narrative progresses, through the limitations he imposes on his own knowledge.<sup>154</sup> At the start of Book Two he states conclusively that a conspiracy of the Belgae existed, however he later describes that he confirmed the rumours through the Senones and other tribes who were close to the Belgae, illustrating that he desires this account to be revelatory even though he has confirmed the plot's existence at the start.<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, as the passage progresses, numbers appear through the indirect speech of the Remi, rather than when Caesar actually meets the enemy in battle, so that the initial rumours develop into a full account of the extensive numbers involved.<sup>156</sup> In doing so an impression of apprehension builds, through the lack of certainty among the characters.<sup>157</sup> The structuring of the narrative is designed to evoke the desired response in the audience, and to build tension in the passages before battle through the measured presentation of details.

Similarly Caesar appears to use varying levels of omniscience in order to create tension, such as an account in Britain where he only gradually reveals the circumstances of an attack against the Seventh Legion, adopting a style that reflects his evolving perception at the time. As he states:

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<sup>153</sup> See Grillo (2011) pp. 244-253 on narrative flexibility.

<sup>154</sup> 2.1-2.4. Caesar's technique for reporting the location and activity of the Nervii is similar to the manner he reports the catalogue of the Belgae.

<sup>155</sup> See 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 for the general movement of information and clarification.

<sup>156</sup> See below pp. 74-77 for further discussion.

<sup>157</sup> See 2.4. Refer to pp. 71-88 below and pp. 177-184 for the objective of this representation and the topos of the multitude.



...ii qui pro portis castrorum in statione erant, Caesari nuntiaverunt pulverem maiorem, quam consuetudo ferret, in ea parte videri quam in partem legio iter fecisset. Caesar id quod erat suspicatus, aliquid novi a barbaris initum consilii, cohortes, quae in stationibus erant, secum in eam partem proficisci, ex reliquis duas in stationem succedere, reliquas armari et confestim se subsequi iussit. cum paulo longius a castris processisset, suos ab hostibus premi atque aegre sustinere et conferta legione ex omnibus partibus tela conici animadvertit.<sup>158</sup>

The passage establishes Caesar's limited perspective, as he only states that the guards reported dust clouds, rather than recording objective information regarding the enemy attack.<sup>159</sup> He also records that he only suspected something was wrong, rather than state clearly what was happening. Even the actual battlefield is described in this manner, as he uses *animadvertit* to limit his perspective to that at the time of the battle.<sup>160</sup> This style supports the impression of vulnerability, and as with the other passages examined in this section, indicates that selectivity is based on the effect of the information on the audience, even where this places clarity of the historical event or consistency regarding the narrator's knowledge in a subordinate position.

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<sup>158</sup> 4.32.1-4.32.4.

<sup>159</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) p. 83 on self-promotion and the realism of the scene. See Grillo (2011) p. 256 for the similarity of Dyrrachium in *Bellum Civile* 3.69.

<sup>160</sup> 4.32.4. See also 4.31.1 for Caesar's limited knowledge of affairs.

### The Structure of the Sabis River Account

The desire to evoke a reaction from the audience is particularly evident in the Sabis River narrative, which is structured to create elements of suspense and surprise.<sup>161</sup> The self-promotional aspects of Caesar's presentation of himself and his enemy in this passage are further examined in Chapters Three and Four.<sup>162</sup> In this section, the passage is examined to show that Caesar captures the elements of suspense and surprise, and how information that describes the circumstances is carefully presented prior to battle itself to establish tension by focussing on the relative superiority of the enemy to Caesar's forces.<sup>163</sup> While the enemy probably enjoyed some advantages in the historical battle, this feature in the account is a stylistic concern that determines the order and nature of the information related, and illustrates that Caesar is particularly concerned to do more than record events, as he appears to use military detail to engage his audience.

In the passage preceding the battle narrative, suspense is built through the presentation of the intelligence gathering process, and by balancing the knowledge of characters.<sup>164</sup> Caesar describes his own activity prior to the battle, making enquiries and finding out about the Nervii from the Remi, captives and other sources in the lands of the Ambiani, so he appears knowledgeable of affairs through the progression of the narrative.<sup>165</sup> However he also ensures that the Nervii are equally knowledgeable, as they are not only informed of the states that had capitulated to him, but await him at the river, prepared and in the clear expectation he will arrive.<sup>166</sup> In spite of the inquiries, the Nervii are clearly described as equal in intelligence gathering. The choice of narrative style ensures parity with regard to knowledge, so

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<sup>161</sup> 2.15-2.29. Brown (1999) pays particular attention to style in the Sabis River account, at pp. 340-341 noting elements of battle such as ring composition. For Brown, at p. 342 the significance of battle as a literary construct is to amplify the *virtus* of the two sides. For early work see Oppermann (1933) pp. 37-41, 56-64, 85-89; Pascucci (1956) pp. 137-174. On narrative choice see Görler (1980) pp. 20-22. See also 5.26 and the lack of details before the camp of Sabinus and Cotta is attacked.

<sup>162</sup> This is addressed further at pp. 192-204 and pp. 222-238 below.

<sup>163</sup> Mannetter (1995) p. 104 notes that Caesar's audience knew the outcome, therefore he had to build suspense through portrayal of events leading up to the expected outcome.

<sup>164</sup> See Mannetter (1995) p. 104 on suspense. The idea of parity of knowledge is a result of balancing the intelligence efforts of the Nervii against that of Caesar as author. See also Berard (1985) pp. 94-95; Grillo (2011) p. 243; Pascucci (1956) p. 139.

<sup>165</sup> See 2.4.1 for the Remi, 2.15.3 for the Ambiani, and 2.17.2 for the captives.

<sup>166</sup> See 2.15.5 for them rebuking those who submitted, and 2.16.1-2.16.5.

that the text does not afford any particular superiority to the character of Caesar in terms of awareness of the attack.

As the episode progresses Caesar includes the intelligence that the Nervii have gathered regarding his own forces. This appears to ensure that in the contrast of intelligence gathering, the Nervii are superior.<sup>167</sup> Having found out the location of the Nervii, he then states that he sends out scouts to locate a site for the camp. As he states:

His rebus cognitis exploratores centurionesque praemittit, qui locum castris idoneum deligant. cum ex dediticiis Belgis reliquisque Gallis complures Caesarem secuti una iter facerent, quidam ex his, ut postea ex captivis cognitum est, eorum dierum consuetudine itineris nostri exercitus perspecta nocte ad Nervios pervenerunt atque his demonstrarunt inter singulas legiones impedimentorum magnum numerum intercedere neque esse quicquam negotii, cum prima legio in castra venisset reliquaeque legiones magnum spatium abessent, hanc sub sarcinis adoriri; qua pulsa impedimentisque direptis futurum ut reliquae contra consistere non auderent.<sup>168</sup>

While Caesar states that he has scouts at work, the knowledge gained through spies places the Nervii in a superior position as they are privy to information that the Romans are not. He even foreshadows Nervian victory by describing how they intend to win.<sup>169</sup> There is a marked contrast between the start of the passage on Roman intelligence and the content, so that while Caesar knows this due to information from captives taken later, he is ensuring that the audience is aware of the information leaked to the enemy and the vulnerability of the Romans at the time.<sup>170</sup> The passage illustrates that information is conveyed so that the position as narrator does not endow Caesar with overt superiority, and actually illustrates the enemy advantage at the time.

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<sup>167</sup> See Grillo (2011) p. 252 on the technique.

<sup>168</sup> 2.17.1-2.17.4.

<sup>169</sup> Mannetter (1995) pp. 101, 112-113 has a different view, believing that this serves to foreshadow the result. However while the statement *ut postea ex captivis cognitum est* may have this effect, the content of the information gathered serves to build tension by placing the enemy in a position of strength. The audience may reflect that the Romans eventually won, but at this stage of the narrative the obstacles facing the Romans are formidable, providing the necessary tension.

<sup>170</sup> Caesar's knowledge allows for the enemy to be portrayed in a position of strength. See de Jong, Nünlist, Bowie, (2007a) p. xvii, for the definition of *paralepsis*.

This pattern exists throughout the preliminary stages of the account, as Caesar constructs the intelligence gathering and sequence of events before the battle to further build tension.<sup>171</sup> The three passages prior to the battle follow a similar pattern, with two chapters starting with action by the Romans, but developing into extended passages concerning the activity, knowledge and resources available to the enemy. For example Caesar makes a three-day journey, and then has the location of the enemy described to him, only to then describe enemy activity and preparation.<sup>172</sup> Then he sends out scouts, only to redirect the narrative into a passage about the information brought to the Nervii and the advantages of terrain that they possess.<sup>173</sup> Finally, he briefly mentions the fact that the scouts select ground for camp, but uses the passage to describe the topography on both sides of the river and the advantageous location of the enemy.<sup>174</sup> In each case, the Romans engage in brief activity, but the emphasis is on the relative strength and knowledge of the enemy, so that suspense is built prior to the battle itself.

The final introductory passage, the description of topography, blends various aspects of both the descriptive background and intelligence gathering to enhance the impression of danger.<sup>175</sup> One method is to present the intelligence that the Nervii gather and to develop it into an explanation of how the terrain works against the Romans, so that Caesar condenses two concepts within a passage to present obstacles to Roman victory.<sup>176</sup> As he states of the terrain:

*Adiuvabat etiam eorum consilium, qui rem deferebant, quod Nervii antiquitus, cum equitatu nihil possent, neque enim ad hoc tempus ei rei student, sed quicquid possunt, pedestribus valent copiis, quo facilius finitimorum equitatum, si praedandi causa ad eos venissent, impedirent, teneris arboribus incisis atque inflexis crebrisque in latitudinem ramis enatis et rubis sentibusque interietis effecerant, ut instar muri hae saepes munimentum praeberent, quo non modo non intrari, sed ne*

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<sup>171</sup> On suspense in general see Mannetter (1995) pp. 113-118. As noted at p. 103 foreshadowing also arouses curiosity.

<sup>172</sup> 2.16.1-2.16.5.

<sup>173</sup> 2.17.1-2.17.4.

<sup>174</sup> 2.18.1.-2.18.3.

<sup>175</sup> See Kraus (2010) p. 53. The holding back of topography for effect is not unique to Caesar.

<sup>176</sup> See also 3.9.3-3.9.8 for the Venetii account, where the confidence of the enemy and the terrain are closely related.

perspici quidem posset. his rebus cum iter agminis nostri impediretur, non omittedendum sibi consilium Nervii existimaverunt.<sup>177</sup>

This description of hedges that favour the Nervii follows on directly from the information that the spies brought to them, and comes before the description of the actual topography of the battlefield. In using this sequence, one topographical feature of the battle, the hedges, is separated from a later description of the field itself.<sup>178</sup> The effect appears deliberate, as it condenses the dangers to the Romans, and the Nervii appear to control both knowledge of the Roman activities and the terrain itself.<sup>179</sup> By following the spies' narration with the description of this piece of terrain, descriptive details of topography are used to maximise suspense in the lead up to battle.

Caesar also combines other topographical and perceptive information, demonstrating that the descriptive and subjective aspects of the account interact for the effect of surprise. He never explicitly states that the Romans are unaware of the location of the enemy, and according to the text he is actually expecting the Nervii to be here, as he found out their location from captives.<sup>180</sup> Nevertheless, the narrative at this point is constructed to enhance this idea of an ambush; the structuring of surprise apparent in the manner the topography is described:

Loci natura erat haec, quem locum nostri castris delegerant: collis ab summo aequaliter declivis ad flumen Sabim, quod supra nominavimus, vergebat. ab eo flumine pari acclivitate collis nascebatur adversus huic et contrarius, passus circiter ducentos, infimus apertus, ab superiore parte silvestris, ut non facile introrsus perspici posset. intra eas silvas hostes in occulto sese continebant. in aperto loco secundum flumen paucae stationes equitum videbantur. fluminis erat altitudo pedum circiter trium.<sup>181</sup>

The passage opens with an explanation of why the camp site is selected, integrating terrain features into the site selection. However, not only the terrain is included in this

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<sup>177</sup> 2.17.4-2.17.5.

<sup>178</sup> See 2.18 for the actual description of the battlefield.

<sup>179</sup> Note that this appears different to the kind of geographical representation Krebs (2006) notes at p. 125 as Krebs relates topography to broad ideas of authority.

<sup>180</sup> 2.17.2.

<sup>181</sup> 2.18.1-2.18.3.

passage but also the location and disposition of the enemy. Furthermore, the woods where the enemy are hiding are described as impenetrable to sight, so that centurions and scouts seem to act without this knowledge, and whether they know the enemy are there is unclear.<sup>182</sup> In describing the terrain thus, Caesar conflates three concepts in one passage: the disposition for battle of the enemy, the actual topography, and most importantly the limited knowledge of the Romans, all through an initial description of the camp site selection. The passage may be introduced as a description of terrain choice, but in this ostensibly descriptive passage, the impression of the threat is clearly developed.

This description of terrain serves the dual purpose of presenting the topography for the audience, while at the same time anticipating the movement of the enemy attack, illustrating the objective of building suspense. The way that the passage describes the terrain is critical, as the perspective initially seems to follow the movement of the scouts, but then develops into a foreshadowing of the attack itself.<sup>183</sup> The narrative follows the slope of the hill from the camp down to and across the river, then up to the woods. Importantly, Caesar then brings the narrative back to the river, following the advance that the Nervii will take, and ending with the information that the river is three feet deep. In doing so, he ends the passage with the most important piece of information, as at three feet deep, it is clear it can be crossed.<sup>184</sup> By bringing the perspective back to this point, he demonstrates the subtlety of his technique as he saves the most ominous information for the end. A simple description of terrain has been structured to foreshadow the movement to follow, and to linger on the most pertinent aspect of the attack.

In comparing the narrative and descriptive designs of this passage, it is worth noting where the impact falls most on the audience. An array of battle is omitted, and neither the locations of the various enemy tribes nor any other information regarding their dispositions are given. The effect is that the progression of the narrative is not forced

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<sup>182</sup> 2.16.1. Kagan leaves out the description of the Nervii in her analysis of Caesar's view of terrain, thereby missing an important aspect of what Caesar is trying to achieve with the passage. See Kagan (2006) p. 129.

<sup>183</sup> See Mannetter (1995) pp. 97-118 on foreshadowing. On speed in this account see Gerlinger (2008) pp. 163-166. On smoothness of the narrative and terrain see Pascucci (1956) pp. 142-143.

<sup>184</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 317 states that the opening is described in tactical terms. The literary objective in this case does not conflict with the communication of some tactical information.

to dwell in one place, an effect that might otherwise undermine the foreshadowed movement of the enemy.<sup>185</sup> In this case, the sacrifice of an array of battle seems to be clearly related to the needs of the narrative, as the objective is to create a stylistic image that supports the impression of surprise, to build tension, and to stress the vulnerability of the Romans.

In constructing this particular passage, Caesar appears to be motivated by a desire to create a reaction in his audience, and this objective guides the presentation of the military circumstances. The relationship of narrator and audience and the desire to evoke a reaction appears to be a fundamental determinant in the construction of battle, illustrating the extent to which Caesar's battle diverges from a simple record of victory, as the narrative is governed by factors related to his relationship with his audience and the desire to create a compelling account from the historical event.

### **Creating a Topos and the Belgic Multitude**

The battle against the Belgae in Book Two is further evidence of the difference between a reconstruction of details and the creation of a self-promotional narrative, as Caesar develops the historical victory into the narrative form. Kraus notes that "...any literary rendition of the past will inevitably move into the realm of the figurative, indeed, of the poetic" and states this is particularly true of ancient artistic prose due to sense of "literary history and rhetorical conventions".<sup>186</sup> Caesar's record of the battle against the Belgae in Book Two illustrates this to be correct in his case, as the account uses the numeric aspect of battle in order to create the impression of a vast host against which he ultimately prevails. The persuasive use of these numbers is examined further in Chapter Two.<sup>187</sup> It is important for the current section to note that Caesar does more than simply report numbers, and promotes his victory by creating the topos of a multitude.<sup>188</sup> This topos is not unique to Caesar, Riggsby noting the

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<sup>185</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 289 notes that Caesar is only interested in terrain where it slows or speeds the *impetus* of troops. In this instance the description serves two purposes, as the tactically important is also the most pertinent for a gripping narrative.

<sup>186</sup> Kraus (2005b) p. 243. Note that the complexity of the issue of a topos is recognised by Roth (2006) p. 57 who notes on sieges in Livy that literary topoi do not necessarily reflect fictionalisation, as the events are common to both the historical context and literature.

<sup>187</sup> See pp. 123-126 below.

<sup>188</sup> 2.1-2.12. For self-promotion through battle narrative, see Chapter Four.

presence of “raw numbers” as one of the “traditional themes” in discussion of Gauls.<sup>189</sup> It is an interpretation of the enemy force that is not simply a retelling of the numeric odds faced, but a literary artifice that determines the structure of the account and the depiction of events described therein.

The objective of addressing the topos of enemy numbers is achieved through several methods. Most evident is the repetition of the word *multitudo*, which is used frequently throughout the account, and while this might seem applicable due to the size of the enemy force described, it is specifically designed to create an impression in the audience and is not simply a description of enemy forces.<sup>190</sup> In addition, the passages prior to the confrontation draw attention to size as the primary feature of their confederation, such as through a reference to the opening of the *Bellum Gallicum* in order to establish the scope of the confrontation. Furthermore Caesar uses a catalogue to build the impression of size, even where the details contained therein are not relevant to the course of the battle narrative. The careful construction of the text illustrates that the objective of addressing the topos determines the construction of the battle, and that this account is far from just a description of the Belgic force encountered.

Caesar makes frequent use of *multitudo*, a reductive term that communicates the sheer size of the enemy force. While the word is applicable elsewhere in defining the enemy, it is particularly evident in this account.<sup>191</sup> Caesar uses this word ten times in this passage, from a total of eighty one throughout the work, indicating that the size of the host is emphasised through choice of wording.<sup>192</sup> Importantly, he condenses the usage, employing it nine times in twelve chapters, a much more concentrated use than

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<sup>189</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 174, 177. See Mannetter (1995) pp. 151-153 on the topos. See also Jervis (2001) p. 186 on enemy numbers at Alesia 7.80.4.

<sup>190</sup> Kraus (2009) pp. 171-172 notes the general use of topos by Caesar, such as the *urbs capta* theme. However, as noted this does not make the information untrue. See Mannetter (1995) pp. 151-152.

<sup>191</sup> Note the concept is recurring throughout the work, see for example 1.2.5, 1.31.16, 1.35.3, 3.17.7 and in battle see 1.52.6, 2.24.4, 3.3.2, 7.70.3 as examples. It is even used of enemy arms at 2.32.4.

<sup>192</sup> Not all of the uses are in reference to the size of the enemy force, such as at 2.10.3, but the frequency is still a notable feature of the episode. See also pp. 297-305 below for the manner the Usipetes and Tencteri are described as a threat due to their numbers, but how this is limited to the danger they pose to Gaul. This may also be the case with the citation of 120,000 Germani at 1.31.5-1.31.6. The Helvetii census at 1.29 also illustrates, through a revelatory passage, the numbers of that enemy.



at Alesia, a narrative where the term appears nine times over twenty seven chapters.<sup>193</sup> More importantly, it is used in a number of contexts, not just in a description of the enemy force, but in descriptions of combat, or ethnic fighting techniques, or even the use of missiles.<sup>194</sup> The intensity and range of usage indicates that there is a particular effort to evoke an established topos regarding the numbers of the enemy.

The use of the word is not merely descriptive, and it is part of a larger scheme of representation that is the foundation of the entire account. This is evident as Caesar uses implicit assumptions without any form of objective verification. He opens Book Two by describing the plot by the Belgae against Rome, and states that all of the Belgae are involved in the conspiracy, even though one tribe, the Remi are actually not involved.<sup>195</sup> This information comes to him through the letters of Labienus, and his implicit acceptance establishes early on that Labienus is correct about the scope of the threat.<sup>196</sup> Importantly, the reasons for the revolt immediately follow this statement, and lend legitimacy to the rumours, as narrator omniscience applies to all the information in the statement *coniurandi has esse causas*.<sup>197</sup> There is no doubt about the existence of a conspiracy and the extent of a revolt, which are conflated so that both are verified to create the impression of a great force gathering.

Caesar enhances the scope of the forces involved by placing the enemy within their strategic context. It is particularly clear how large the Belgae are as a proportion of Gaul when he states: *crebri ad eum rumores adferebantur, litterisque item Labieni certior fiebat omnes Belgas, quam tertiam esse Galliae partem dixeramus, contra populum Romanum coniurare obsidesque inter se dare*.<sup>198</sup> This statement refers back to the opening of Book One, so that the audience is aware of the significance of the event in terms of the size of the conspiracy and the numbers involved.<sup>199</sup> Therefore the use of *omnes Belgas* is not, at this stage to establish a numeric figure, but to contextualise the people and location in geographic terms, to establish the scope of the

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<sup>193</sup> While Alesia also features a huge number of enemy forces, Caesar is also concerned there with the contrast of leadership between himself and Vercingetorix. See pp. 260-276 below.

<sup>194</sup> See a discussion of the traits assigned to the multitude below at pp. 177-184.

<sup>195</sup> 2.1.1.

<sup>196</sup> 2.1.1.

<sup>197</sup> 2.1.2.

<sup>198</sup> 2.1.1-2.1.2.

<sup>199</sup> The numbers of Belgae are not actually being assessed at this point, as at 1.1.1-1.1.3 he does not state numbers either.

problem. The plot of the Belgae is placed within a broader schema, enhancing the impression of size.

Caesar also uses anecdotal evidence to support the impression of size. He states when the Belgae arrive for battle: *quae castra, ut fumo atque ignibus significabatur, amplius milibus passuum octo in latitudinem patebant*.<sup>200</sup> This piece of information supports the topos, as there is no need to elaborate on the size of the camp which plays no part in the battle. The information is purely to aid visualisation of the host and give a reference for the audience, demonstrating that it is designed to support the impression of the multitude.

The most important way in which Caesar encourages the impression of size is through the use of a catalogue, which is a highly effective and direct description of the numbers, however the manner of reporting demonstrates the development of the topos.<sup>201</sup> Caesar chooses to deliver the account of Belgic numbers in indirect speech, stating of his query that: *cum ab his quaereret, quae civitates quantaeque in armis essent et quid in bello possent, sic reperiebat*.<sup>202</sup> He has the Remi answer as follows:

...plerosque Belgas esse ortos a Germanis Rhenumque antiquitus traductos propter loci fertilitatem ibi consedissee Gallosque, qui ea loca incolerent, expulisse solosque esse qui patrum nostrorum memoria omni Gallia vexata Teutonos Cimbroque intra suos fines ingredi prohibuerint; qua ex re fieri uti earum rerum memoria magnam sibi auctoritatem magnosque spiritus in re militari sumerent. de numero eorum omnia se habere explorata Remi dicebant, propterea quod propinquitatibus affinitatibusque coniuncti, quantam quisque multitudinem in communi Belgarum concilio ad id bellum pollicitus sit cognoverint. plurimum inter eos Bellovacos et virtute et auctoritate et hominum numero valere: hos posse conficere armata milia centum, pollicitos ex eo numero electa milia sexaginta totiusque belli imperium sibi postulare. Suessiones suos esse finitimos; fines latissimos feracissimosque agros possidere. apud eos fuisse regem nostra etiam memoria Diviciacum, totius Galliae

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<sup>200</sup> 2.7.4.

<sup>201</sup> Mannetter (2004) p. 140 notes how complex catalogues are designed to manipulate the audience. The number is very large, and impossible to verify in the absence of supporting information. The catalogue however may be analysed to determine the objectives in its construction.

<sup>202</sup> 2.4.1.

potentissimum, qui cum magnae partis harum regionum, tum etiam Britanniae imperium obtinuerit; nunc esse regem Galbam; ad hunc propter iustitiam prudentiamque summam totius belli omnium voluntate deferri; oppida habere numero XII, polliceri milia armata quinquaginta; totidem Nervios, qui maxime feri inter ipsos habeantur longissimeque absint; quindecim milia Atrebates, Ambianos decem milia, Morinos XXV milia, Menapios VIII milia, Caletos X milia, Vellocasses et Viromandos totidem, Atuaticos decem et novem milia; Condrusos, Eburones, Caerosos, Caemanos, qui uno nomine Germani appellantur, arbitrari ad XL milia.<sup>203</sup>

This catalogue is an unusual way for the Remi to respond to an assessment of Belgic strength if Caesar is only reporting what they said in response to his question, since the Remi are Belgae themselves, and are thus describing their own arrogance when they state: *qua ex re fieri uti earum rerum memoria magnam sibi auctoritatem magnosque spiritus in re militari sumerent*.<sup>204</sup> Nevertheless the passage allows the Remi to become the spokespersons for Belgic character and history in a manner that suits the aim of addressing the size of the enemy force.<sup>205</sup> It may therefore be an unusual statement for the Remi to make in answer to the question, but it allows considerable flexibility in the type of information included.

The Remi specifically contextualise the catalogue in a manner that allows Caesar to develop the concept of the multitude, and thereby establish the topos. The Remi establish that the size of the Belgic army is great even before narrating the catalogue when they state: *quantam quisque multitudinem in communi Belgarum concilio ad id bellum pollicitus sit cognoverint*.<sup>206</sup> The list that follows is therefore contextualised as the details of this great number, and provides the evidence to support the introduction by the Remi. It is not merely a list of contingents, as the speech of the Remi allows Caesar to clarify and enforce the image of an unusually large host through the secondary narrator.

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<sup>203</sup> 2.4.2-2.4.10.

<sup>204</sup> 2.4.3. For a similar use of *spiritus* that illustrates arrogance see Ariovistus at 1.33.5.

<sup>205</sup> See also pp. 177-184 below.

<sup>206</sup> 2.4.4.

Caesar also uses the introduction of the catalogue to achieve the impression of size and scope, through associations with the broader context of hostile activity against Rome. He commences the description by describing the Belgae as a people, but associates them with Germanic threats, as they are the only Gauls to stop the Teutones and Cimbri, an apparent indicator of their strength.<sup>207</sup> When contextualised with the difficulties Rome faced in stopping those Germani in the previous century, the Belgae are thus presented as a powerful force.<sup>208</sup> This passage describes the threat of the Belgae in terms of other migratory attacks, thus creating an impression of scope greater than any specific short term grievances with Rome.<sup>209</sup> The introduction to the catalogue provides a thematic context in which to view their society, one that functions to increase the impression of scope.

Where Caesar describes the actual strength of the Belgic tribes, the catalogue serves a similar function that broadens their contribution and establishes the expansive nature of the confederation. He provides a description of the previous ruler of the Suessones, Diviciacus, whose inclusion is unusual as he is no longer leader of the people.<sup>210</sup> While Diviciacus has little relevance in the current conflict, the description of his relationship to the Britons allows for an exotic anecdote that expands the context of the confederation, as his prior position, and the extent of his power extends even into Britain. The catalogue therefore illustrates the expanded scope of Belgic influence and power, in order to reinforce the topos with greater associations.

While providing a list of various tribal names, the catalogue enhances the idea of a mass of men, as nowhere in the catalogue are the Belgae assessed in terms of the types of troops, and the impression is one of raw numbers rather than an accurate assessment of enemy strength.<sup>211</sup> Caesar does not give a description of Belgic arms,

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<sup>207</sup> 2.4.2.

<sup>208</sup> See Caesar's comments at 1.12. This ostensibly puts the Belgae in opposition to a traditional enemy of Rome, previously described in Book One. However as described above, Caesar has blurred the lines between Gauls and Germani, by describing the ancestral roots of the Belgae. Consequently, the introduction of these Germanic peoples into the narrative does not place the Belgae in opposition to them. See Plutarch *Marius* 13-27 for the historical battle.

<sup>209</sup> As with Tigurini at 1.12, or the Germani at 1.40. See also the reference to the migration later at 2.29.

<sup>210</sup> 2.4.7.

<sup>211</sup> See Mannetter (1995) p. 153 on the idea of a mass of men. See also 1.51.2 and the listing of Germanic tribes. See also the major other catalogue at Alesia which is addressed below at pp. 266-267.

armour or fighting styles, or even a custom with which to associate them.<sup>212</sup> He does not even specify if they have unusual weaponry, or clothing that would be of military interest to his audience, a marked difference to Livy's attempt to do so in his description of Cannae.<sup>213</sup> Most importantly there is no information on what type of troops the Belgae have, so the numbers of cavalry, infantry and missile users are completely absent. The only details provided are that the Bellovaci are strongest in *virtus*, and the Nervii are *ferus*, or wild.<sup>214</sup> The lack of elaboration on important issues like troop types demonstrates that the catalogue is designed to support the idea of a sheer mass of manpower, rather than a full and accurate assessment of combat strength.

The impression of the multitude replaces any objective assessment of the actual numbers faced. The catalogue is highly subjective and of limited contextual value for battle, as the numbers given are only the men promised, and Caesar does not assess these against what he actually faces later, in spite of his overall attitude that Gauls are unreliable reporters and the information of the Remi should, by his own assessments, not be trusted.<sup>215</sup> He instead states that the Belgae came against him *omnibus copiis*, and that he advanced *postquam omnes Belgarum copias in unum locum coactas ad se venire vidit*.<sup>216</sup> Consequently, the word of the Remi stands as the only record of how many men actually fought, and the impression of great odds is implicitly accepted.<sup>217</sup> While it is probable that the actual numbers of such a host could not be accurately confirmed, the presentation ensures that the figures of the Remi are not specifically disputed within the narrative.<sup>218</sup> The development of the topos is given prominence

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<sup>212</sup> Note that this is the case throughout most of the work. Some formations, tactics and weapons are mentioned, and discussed in the relevant case studies. See the Germani battle discussed below at pp. 148-149 and the Suebi at pp. 299-301 below. In this catalogue the lack of detail regarding the troop types assists in the impression that the Belgae are an undifferentiated mass reliant primarily on numbers for success.

<sup>213</sup> See Livy 22.46.

<sup>214</sup> 2.4.5, 2.4.8. Caesar's purpose is clear in the construction of the rest of the introductory passages, which build on the idea of a single mass of men. Once Caesar has completed his characterisation of the Nervii, he avoids any further detail of individual tribes. The attention drawn to the Nervii is discussed below at pp. 192-204.

<sup>215</sup> See Book 4.5 in particular 4.5.3 where Gauls are explained to act on *incertis rumoribus*.

<sup>216</sup> 2.7.3, 2.5.4. Note how he gives no explanation why he advanced when this was precisely what he did not want at 2.5.2.

<sup>217</sup> Whether this is a method of avoiding complicity in an apparent exaggeration is unclear, but Caesar writes with the presumption that the numbers are correct, not verifying them through an observation or other form of confirmation.

<sup>218</sup> Contrast the Helvetii at 1.29 where the numbers are given in a census.

over a confirmation of the actual numbers of protagonists, as the impression is more important than clarification.

There is a disparity between the impression of numbers and the way Caesar describes his own actions that demonstrates that the objective of creating an image of the enemy is paramount, even where it creates difficulties in understanding the course of the conflict. He specifically mentions in indirect speech that such a multitude is a strategic threat, stating:

Ipse Diviciacum Haeduum magnopere cohortatus docet, quanto opere rei publicae communisque salutis intersit manus hostium distineri, ne cum tanta multitudine uno tempore confligendum sit. id fieri posse, si suas copias Haedui in fines Bellovacorum introduxerint et eorum agros populari coeperint. his mandatis eum ab se dimittit.<sup>219</sup>

The threat of Belgic unity is very clear through the reference to communal safety and the use of *magnopere*. Yet Caesar waits until the Belgae are united before advancing, so that there is a discrepancy between the threat as it is raised and the actions he takes in response, and he does not explain why he waits in this situation.<sup>220</sup> The narrative threat of the multitude is created, but the strategy for dealing with this is problematic as he does not describe or fully explain his own responses to that threat.

Importantly, prior to the battle Caesar does not detract from the impression and avoids elaborating on the Roman forces that he has to deal with this threat. He does not provide the details of his own forces that oppose the catalogue, and it is left to the audience to gather this information from various points in the text.<sup>221</sup> He has not specifically mentioned at this point that he had eight legions with him in total, and the only mention of Roman numbers so far is the two new legions recruited and led by

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<sup>219</sup> 2.5.2-2.5.4.

<sup>220</sup> Fighting Gallic opposition piecemeal is Caesar's overall strategy in the Venetii campaign at 3.11, where he takes pre-emptive action to prevent unification among various tribes.

<sup>221</sup> See Mannetter (1995) p. 158. In Homeric catalogues the forces of the protagonists are larger, but as Mannetter notes, there are significant differences to Caesar. See 1.24.2-1.24.3, 2.2.1-2.2.3, 2.8.5 for the numbers.

Quintus Pedius.<sup>222</sup> There is no mention yet of the six legions already with him, even when he sets out with the army, so that while the force is dwarfed by the numbers of Belgae, he still avoids drawing attention to the massive Roman force with him, even though it is unprecedented so far in the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>223</sup> By not raising its unusual size Caesar does not detract from the image he is evoking, and may even enhance it, as the only figure to directly contrast with the vast host is the two untested legions.<sup>224</sup> The narrative is constructed so that details that might detract from the image are marginalised until the battle itself, by which time the impression of massed odds is firmly established.

The method of describing the contingents also aids the impression of size. Caesar uses asyndeton to describe the numbers of each minor tribe, building up the impetus of the passage as it approaches the end, the numbers coming faster to enhance the idea of a mass building momentum.<sup>225</sup> He ends the passage with a grouping of tribes, in effect summarising the idea that he is conveying. The Germanic contingent, just like the Belgae as a whole, is a major threat due to the conglomeration of individual numbers into a mass. Even the length of the passage achieves this, as it is one of only two long catalogues in the work.<sup>226</sup> It achieves the objective of impressing on the audience the sheer size of the Belgic force not only through the numerical data, but the manner of presentation, and the structure of the catalogue itself supports the objective of creating the topos.

### The Multitude and the Battle

The creation of the topos and the impression of the multitude are not consistent with a clear explanation of the battle. In particular Caesar's actions seem unusual unless the Belgic host had separated, an action he makes no mention of in his account. Initially, Caesar states that the Belgae turned from their march to attack the town of Bibrax,

<sup>222</sup> See 2.2.1-2.2.3 for the two legions. The six legions are mentioned specifically at 2.8.5.

<sup>223</sup> There were six legions mentioned at 1.24.

<sup>224</sup> Note that untested legions are clearly accepted as weaker, as is suggested at the Helvetii battle when they are placed behind the veterans at 1.24.

<sup>225</sup> See Mannetter (1995) p. 148. As noted, the use of asyndeton lends force to a passage. See also Mannetter (1995) pp. 149-151. This method is used in several other accounts, such as at 1.51.2, 3.27.1-3.27.2, and most effectively at Alesia 7.75.

<sup>226</sup> See 7.75.

and then gives an explanation of siege tactics that suggests that a large number of Belgae, if not all of them, are involved in the assault.<sup>227</sup> His response and the result are as follows:

Eo de media nocte Caesar isdem ducibus usus, qui nuntii ab Iccio venerant, Numidas et Cretas sagittarios et funditores Baleares subsidio oppidanis mittit. Quorum adventu et Remis cum spe defensionis studium propugnandi accessit et hostibus eadem de causa spes potiundi oppidi discessit. itaque paulisper apud oppidum morati agrosque Remorum depopulati omnibus vicis aedificiisque, quo adire potuerant...<sup>228</sup>

In response to an assault by a force that is recorded as over 300,000 men, Caesar separates his forces and sends only the light-armed troops and cavalry. If the whole force of the Belgae is there and is as strong as he suggests, this is an unusual decision to make, and he does not provide the reasoning for it.<sup>229</sup> Furthermore, based on the narrative, the implication is that because the town is surrounded, the auxiliaries would be unable to join the town, and thus would be largely alone against the Belgae.<sup>230</sup> Considering how careful Caesar is later to build defences against this enemy, the decision seems almost reckless.<sup>231</sup> Caesar's action could be explained if the Belgae had subdivided their forces, but he makes no mention of this, presumably in order to maintain the impression of a massed host. Based purely on the narrative, the decision is unusual with regard to the impression given of the host's size. However the problem is explained by the need to present the Belgae as a massive single entity.

The effect of the topos is also evident in the problems of motivation ascribed to the Belgic host, who act in accordance with the idea of a multitude, but without a full account of the reasoning for their decisions. The arrival of light armed auxiliary forces brings hope to the Remi, and the Belgae give up the siege and turn aside from Bibrax

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<sup>227</sup> 2.6.2-2.6.4. Note the specific reference to the use of a *multitudo* hurling stones.

<sup>228</sup> 2.7.1-2.7.3.

<sup>229</sup> See Mannetter (1995) pp. 157-158 on the idea of the smaller conquering the larger as a topos of its own.

<sup>230</sup> Caesar's consistent representation of the multitude means that it is not specified if the host separates and only part of it attacks the town.

<sup>231</sup> See 2.8.1-2.8.5.



because of their arrival, as indicated by the phrase *eadem de causa*.<sup>232</sup> The host of the Belgae retreat from a small light armed force, only to advance against a more powerful threat, a decision that seems odd considering their numbers.<sup>233</sup> Nevertheless, the response of the Belgae to then devastate the fields and move onto the main Roman army is consistent with the ravaging effect of such a huge host on the landscape.<sup>234</sup> The actions of the Belgae seem problematic from the perspective of decision making, but nevertheless are presented as consistent with those of a single great host.

The most striking effect of the objective is that in spite of the detailed catalogue, Caesar omits any separation of the forces and they act as a single unit, not even differentiated by tribe. The host of the Belgae engage in only one action at a time in spite of their vast size, whether that is assaulting the town, ravaging the fields or advancing against the Romans.<sup>235</sup> The effect of this simplification is most evident in the standoff that develops between the two armies prior to combat. As Caesar states:

Palus erat non magna inter nostrum atque hostium exercitum. hanc si nostri transirent, hostes expectabant; nostri autem, si ab illis initium transeundi fieret, ut impeditos adgrederentur, parati in armis erant. interim proelio equestri inter duas acies contendebatur. ubi neutri transeundi initium faciunt, secundiore equitum proelio nostris Caesar suos in castra reduxit. Hostes protinus ex eo loco ad flumen Axonam contenderunt, quod esse post nostra castra demonstratum est.<sup>236</sup>

In this passage, the enemy are not differentiated by tribe, appearing as a single unit. This is in spite of the various tribes who make up the host, and it is different to the specification used when describing the array of the Germani in Book One, or the actions of enemy tribal elements in the battle against the Nervii.<sup>237</sup> The lack of detail

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<sup>232</sup> 2.7.2.

<sup>233</sup> 2.7.3-2.7.4. Moreover, their ravaging of the fields of the Remi is presented as an act that also follows the failure to take the town, and thus appears as an act of frustration or rage.

<sup>234</sup> 2.7.3-2.7.4. See the Suebi and Usipetes and Tenciteri discussed below at pp. 297-306.

<sup>235</sup> See 2.6.1, 2.7.3-2.7.4. See also simplification at Alesia discussed below at 269-270.

<sup>236</sup> 2.9.1-2.9.4.

<sup>237</sup> See 1.51.2. For the Sabis River account see pp. 222-239 below. While it might be argued that Caesar does not specify the tribal details as there is no actual fighting about to commence it is notable that at the Helvetian battle at 1.24.5, he also presents the enemy as a unified body as they approach his army on the hill. In addition, at the Helvetian battle, Caesar only breaks the people up into a roster of tribal units after the battle, so in that case the simplification is consistent within the narrative.

is a simplification that is in marked contrast to the knowledge that this enemy is comprised of a large number of different tribes, some with substantial forces compared to the others.<sup>238</sup> Such a unitary approach to the numbers described is problematic even considering the need to simplify the account into a manageable form. It is indicative of how the objective of communicating the massed nature of the enemy determines the presentation.

The unity of action ascribed to the host also does not allow for the complexities of maintaining such a large army in the field. The size of the Belgic army is massive, yet Caesar underplays the logistical element of war until the very end of the account.<sup>239</sup> While he is very careful to describe his own precautions against being cut off from supply, similar considerations do not plague the Belgae in the early stages of the narrative.<sup>240</sup> The host lays waste to the fields of the Remi as an apparent act of frustration rather than to forage.<sup>241</sup> Similarly, when it tries to cross the river and get behind the Romans, it does so to cut them off from supply.<sup>242</sup> In neither case is the host pressed by its own supply needs, a distinct absence considering that Caesar is particularly aware of the logistical requirements of his own army.<sup>243</sup> The absence of logistics in a narrative where these would have been critical concerns suggests that the account is simplified in favour of the impression created regarding the enemy army.

In the battle Caesar also presents his own forces in a manner that highlights contrasts with the multitude. He mentions that Sabinus is placed in charge of a reserve, but is particular to state that this is made up of only six cohorts.<sup>244</sup> This is the first mention of the forces with him in the battle, and they are puny in comparison to the vast size of the enemy. This approach is also evident in the manner the dispositions of the legions in battle are stated:

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<sup>238</sup> Contrast the Bellovaci, who promise 60,000, with 7,000 from the Menapii, and 10,000 from the Caleti. See 2.4.5, 2.4.9.

<sup>239</sup> 2.10.4. On logistics see in general Roth (1999). While Roth examines logistics for the Roman army, the observations on the requirements for a large force are enlightening.

<sup>240</sup> See 2.5.5, 2.9.5. Caesar's presentation of his own supply is a feature of the narrative. It affects his choice of location, his response to the enemy's fording and his decision to fortify and separate his forces with a minor camp. However he underplays its effect on the enemy until the end, indicating how supply serves separate uses within the narrative. See 2.10.4-2.10.5 for enemy logistics.

<sup>241</sup> 2.7.3.

<sup>242</sup> 2.9.5.

<sup>243</sup> See Rawlings (1998) p. 187 fn. 13 for a discussion of logistics in this encounter.

<sup>244</sup> 2.5.6. See also 7.83, where the Gauls delegate a force of 60,000, which is described in contrast to a camp with named Roman leaders.

Hoc facto duabus legionibus, quas proxime conscripserat, in castris relictis, ut, si quo opus esset subsidio, duci possent, reliquas sex legiones pro castris in acie constituit. hostes item suas copias ex castris eductas instruxerant.<sup>245</sup>

This statement gives prominence to the smaller amount, which is mentioned first, and the larger amount is described as the remainder. The effect is to make the forces seem less imposing than they are, with emphasis on the weaker elements. The presentation gives precedence to his weakest elements in order to enhance the impression of the odds that the vast numbers of Belgae represent.

Such disparity in the forces is evident elsewhere in the account, and the treatment of the auxiliaries seems included to emphasise the difference in forces available to each side. Caesar specifically describes the use he puts the auxiliaries to when he states of their initial role:

Eo de media nocte Caesar isdem ducibus usus, qui nuntii ab Iccio venerant, Numidas et Cretas sagittarios et funditores Baleares subsidio oppidanis mittit.<sup>246</sup>

He then states in the battle:

Certior factus ab Titurio omnem equitatum et levis armaturae Numidas, funditores sagittariosque pontem traducit atque ad eos contendit.<sup>247</sup>

While these two passages describe the commander's orders, such detail regarding auxiliaries is rare, and Book Two is the only book to feature specific mention of these units.<sup>248</sup> It is therefore notable that he also individually describes his weaker units, and that very elaboration supports the scheme by opposing the mass of the Belgae with his

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<sup>245</sup> 2.8.5.

<sup>246</sup> 2.7.1-2.7.2.

<sup>247</sup> 2.10.1.

<sup>248</sup> See the Sabis River account at 2.19.4, 2.24.4 for the only other specific mention of these auxiliaries. Note their presence is implied at 4.25.1.

weakest troops.<sup>249</sup> The specific description of auxiliaries highlights the impression of enemy strength by contrasting it against Caesar's own light troops.

Similarly, the recognition of individuals on the Roman side is in marked contrast to the lack of names among the Belgae once the armies are in proximity. When the Remi send for help, Caesar is particular to identify the leader Iccius as the one who asks for help, thus personalising the response of sending the auxiliaries as an act between two individuals, rather than as a strategic concern of supply, and personal relationships are present in contrast to the masses of enemy.<sup>250</sup> He even provides the detail of Iccius as a man of *summa nobilitate*, drawing attention to the individual.<sup>251</sup> In addition, Caesar repeats the name of Sabinus when describing the Belgic attempt to cross the river, drawing attention to the individual and the paltry force he has to face the enemy host.<sup>252</sup> Within the narrative the effect is to contrast the masses of the enemy with details regarding individuals.<sup>253</sup> The specific mention of these individuals has a narrative purpose in developing the thematic idea of the passage, the contrast of a powerful singular mass against a vulnerable Roman protagonist identified by its individuals.

The description of fortifications also draws attention to the size of the enemy force, even where this has little reference to the course of combat. Caesar describes defences that are not actually used and are not relevant to the course of combat, such as the earthworks in the smaller camp, a fortification that plays no role at all in the battle.<sup>254</sup> Similarly, the *tormenta* that he places on the walls achieve the effect of emphasising his own precautions in the face of such odds, being the first mention of these weapons

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<sup>249</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) p. 297. While these are likely the weaker elements to a parochial Roman audience, they are also the less well armed. The auxiliaries are identified as a separate entity to the legions by being named, an effect that would be less obvious if he were to merely state that he led the troops who were *expeditos*. The decision to take only the light troops against the fording enemy is also problematic, if, as Caesar implies, the whole host of the Belgae has moved to the river. His response seems inadequate and does not explain why the rest of the Roman army is left behind.

<sup>250</sup> 2.6.4.

<sup>251</sup> 2.6.4. The detail that Caesar sent back the same messengers is also an interesting inclusion since it ostensibly explains how the army could be led at night, but also indicates the limited forces available to Caesar.

<sup>252</sup> See 2.9.4, 2.10.1.

<sup>253</sup> This is also the case with *exempla* such as Baculus discussed at pp. 164-165 below, Vorenus and Pullo at p. 338 and Marcus Petronius at pp. 119-121 all of whom appear in contrast to multitudes of enemy.

<sup>254</sup> See 2.5.5-2.5.6. Contrast the defences at Alesia 7.72-7.74 which appear in the battle and the defence of the Rhone at 1.8.

in any of the battles.<sup>255</sup> Most importantly, it is the only description of the weapons when they are not actually in use, suggesting that the inclusion is purely to aid the image he is creating.<sup>256</sup> The effect of such an incidental detail is to give prominence to the issue of fortification and an implicit reminder of the level of caution required in the face of the forces that are described.

Even the resolution of the battle reveals the prominence of the thematic issue. When the Belgae attempt to cross the river they are defeated in a thematically appropriate manner when Caesar states:

Acriter in eo loco pugnatum est. hostes impeditos nostri in flumine adgressi magnum eorum numerum occiderunt; per eorum corpora reliquos audacissime transire conantes multitudine telorum reppulerunt, primos qui transierant equitatu circumventos interfecerunt.<sup>257</sup>

The multitude of missiles that slay the Belgae in the water completes the thematic idea of the Belgic multitude, and are the answer to the threat of them in this encounter. The immensity of the slaughter is also captured with an anecdotal act of courage, the crossing through the bodies of the fallen, a distinctive quality of this encounter which is illustrative of the destruction of the enemy multitude.<sup>258</sup> This inclusion is in contrast to the numerous other instances when bodies would exist on the battlefield and are not described, however it gives the river crossing a grisly, desperate character that emphasises the sheer mass of men in the water.<sup>259</sup> The encounter at the ford is given detail suitable to the thematic resolution of the passage, and it resolves the issue of enemy numbers.

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<sup>255</sup> 2.8.4. See also 4.25.1, 7.41.4, 7.81.5 for later references to *tormenta*. See also a scorpion used at 7.25.4.

<sup>256</sup> See p. 74 fn. 254 above for details.

<sup>257</sup> 2.10.1–2.10.4

<sup>258</sup> Note how each battle tends to have such features that encapsulate the ideas being presented, whether that is the Aquilifer in the landing of Britain, examined at pp. 258–260 below, or Baculus in the Sabis River at p. 233–235 below.

<sup>259</sup> Note the parallels to the Sabis River narrative at 2.27.3–2.27.5. Similar to the courage of the Nervii, that of the Belgae is most apparent in defeat. Caesar is particular here to describe the fighting as killing, demonstrating how he will report the gruesome effects of combat where they suit the purposes of the narrative. The horde of Belgae is relentless and as such the desperation and indifference to individual deaths must be emphasised. What is omitted however is an explanation of the circumstances of the crossing, and whether different elements were trying to cross, or if they came in waves. Instead, Caesar chooses to discuss the character of the Belgae at the climax of the narrative, how they advance even through the bodies of their own men.

By contrast, the actual reasons the Belgae retire are less distinctive, ensuring that the thematic resolution is more memorable than the actual reasons for their defeat. The decision making of the Belgae is described in the following passage:

Hostes ubi et de expugnando oppido et de flumine transeundo spem se fefellisse intellexerunt neque nostros in locum iniquiorem progredi pugnandi causa viderunt atque ipsos res frumentaria deficere coepit, concilio convocato constituerunt optimum esse domum suam quemque reverti et quorum in fines primum Romani exercitum introduxissent, ad eos defendendos undique convenirent, ut potius in suis quam in alienis finibus decertarent et domesticis copiis rei frumentariae uterentur. ad eam sententiam cum reliquis causis haec quoque ratio eos deduxit, quod Diviciacum atque Haeduos finibus Bellovacorum adpropinquare cognoverant. his persuaderi ut diutius morarentur neque suis auxilium ferrent non poterat.<sup>260</sup>

The strategic decisions of the Belgae are finally addressed, however the *concilio convocato* described is a direct result of Caesar's military victory.<sup>261</sup> Consequently combat at the ford and the decision to retreat is closely associated, as is evident in the words: *spem se fefellisse intellexerunt*. While Caesar finally reveals that the issue of logistics is pressing the enemy, these are described subsequent to the defeat in battle, with the issue of the Aedui ravaging their lands far down the list of concerns. While it is not possible to determine the actual reasoning of the Belgae in the account, the thematic resolution at the ford is given prominence. The strategic factors appear almost as an afterthought, demonstrating that the narrative resolution of the battle is given precedence over other, possibly more relevant, reasons.

Caesar continues to present the enemy as a single entity in retreat, in order to resolve the issue of the multitude rather than its individual elements. Once the battle at the ford is over, the enemy confederation breaks up and returns home.<sup>262</sup> In spite of this, they are still described as a single entity during the narration of the pursuit,

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<sup>260</sup> 2.10.4-2.10.5.

<sup>261</sup> On the narrative place of this council see Görler (1976) p. 110.

<sup>262</sup> 2.11.1.

demonstrating the intention to resolve the topos of the massed enemy.<sup>263</sup> In spite of the delay in pursuit, and the clear description of the enemy as separated in *cum sibi quisque primum itineris locum peteret*, the presentation is shaped by the desire to resolve the dispute with the host of the Belgae and not to describe which elements were the particular targets of his pursuit.<sup>264</sup> This impression is maintained even when combat commences in the narrative, as the rearmost ranks of the enemy, and those further from the Romans are not distinguished by tribe.<sup>265</sup> The impression is that the Romans are attacking the entity as a whole, rather than whichever tribe was last or nearest. The vagueness regarding whom the Romans engaged is explained by the depiction on the host as a single entity in defeat.

Caesar even reiterates the idea that it is the multitude that he destroys in the pursuit, in order to clearly address this particular threat and its resolution. As he states:

Hi novissimos adorti et multa milia passuum prosecuti magnam multitudinem eorum fugientium conciderunt...

..tantam eorum multitudinem nostri interfecerunt, quantum fuit diei spatium, sub occasumque solis destiterunt seque in castra, ut erat imperatum, receperunt.<sup>266</sup>

The initial statement is enough to describe the action of the pursuit and the killing of those in flight. However the idea of the multitude is repeated in the second statement, illustrating how important the resolution of the topos is to the account. While the two phrases are separate, they allow the topos to be clearly reiterated at the point of the enemy's final destruction.

In the description of the Belgae, Caesar traces the topos in a consistent presentation path from the moment the enemy appears in the narrative through to their destruction. The description of the intelligence gathering, the roster of forces, and the comparisons he draws all support the impression of the host. The narrative of the battle closes with

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<sup>263</sup> See the notion of the rearguard at 2.11.4.

<sup>264</sup> 2.11.1.

<sup>265</sup> 2.11.4.

<sup>266</sup> 2.11.4-2.11.6.

as much emphasis on the thematic scheme as the actual destruction of the enemy threat, also demonstrating that the account is structured to address, and finally resolve, this particular objective. While the account promotes Caesar's command of the confrontation by emphasising the odds against him, he achieves this aim through thematic references that determine the content, the context, and the structure of the account. While this is favourable to himself as he ultimately triumphs over this enemy, the Belgic encounter is important as it displays that Caesar creates his narrative with an aim of creating a literary impression, rather than just capturing the course of events.

### **The Development of the Octodurus Narrative**

The development of battle narrative for presentation and not simply to reconstruct historical events is also evident in the battle of Octodurus, which is distinctive since it is one where Caesar is not present in the text and the requirement for self-promotion through his own achievements largely absent.<sup>267</sup> The passage is not only isolated as the activity described occurs during winter preparations, and is not directly part of a major campaign, but there appears little pressing impetus for Caesar to defend himself, as the result is not presented as a defeat.<sup>268</sup> This unique status affords a view of the narrator's approach to battle as freedom from the need for promotion of his own activity allows Caesar the primary objective of ensuring a positive reception through the style of presentation.<sup>269</sup> The effect of this objective is evident in the representation of the commander Servius Galba and other combatants, whose motives and perception of events determine the language used of the battle and the description of activity therein.<sup>270</sup> Content appears and disappears when no longer functional to this pattern to the narrative, and details of combat are highly stylised or absent in the

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<sup>267</sup> 3.1-3.6. See also Richter (1977) pp. 134-140 on historical context and p. 139 on the isolation of the passage. For other battle narratives where Caesar is not present, see pp. 205-213 below, and pp. 239-243 for Quintus Cicero in particular. On the perspective of Caesar as narrator see Görler (1976) pp. 100-103, on Galba see p. 113. Görler notes the "identification effect".

<sup>268</sup> Contrast the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta examined in Chapter Five at pp. 319-339 below, which is a clear defeat that Caesar appears to have to explain.

<sup>269</sup> Kraus (1974) pp 160-162 notes some of the rhetorical techniques in use. As Melchior (2004) p. 184 notes Caesar's "most literary" battles are those at which he himself is not present.

<sup>270</sup> Nousek (2004) p. 61 notes the presence of focalization in the work. At p. 69, Nousek notes the focalization in the Octodurus narrative, and at p. 74 of 6.36 where Quintus Cicero's view is focalized, another battle where Caesar was not present.



passage.<sup>271</sup> The number of reconstructive issues, and the consistent pattern in capturing perception subjectively, demonstrates the predominance of the narrative framework over the more practical and descriptive aspects of battle narration, such as the movement of men and the impact of terrain. The battle of Octodurus displays that military source material can appear in order to enhance the style of narrative, and that the account is primarily directed at the reception of the episode.

The perspective for the battle of Octodurus is distinctive in the *Bellum Gallicum*, which usually follows Caesar's own perception and reasoning by default.<sup>272</sup> In the Octodurus narrative his perspective, and his own self-promotional objectives are resolved early in the account and he adopts the perspective of his commander at the scene, Servius Galba.<sup>273</sup> Kraus notes Caesar's precision regarding events he was not present at, and that there is a temptation to see these as worked from legate notes.<sup>274</sup> However, there also strong evidence to suggest that Caesar's technique is similar to the use of mimesis in Sallust, which invites the audience to experience events as the participants did.<sup>275</sup> The narrative shifts from Caesar describing his own activity and perspective, directly to the action that occurs in his absence, and in the abrupt shift in perspective there is a notion that the stylistic concern takes precedence over objective reporting.<sup>276</sup> Caesar does not describe how the news of Octodurus came to him, so with no explanation for the shift in perspective, the battle is not contextualised as part of the commentary's overall third person style of narration.<sup>277</sup> Furthermore, Caesar makes no assessment of the veracity of the information, instead accepting the perception of the characters without authorial comment. Whether this is due to uncertainty at the veracity of the information is not stated.<sup>278</sup> Instead the battle is self-contained and at variance with most of the reporting in the work, where Caesar

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<sup>271</sup> Klaus (1974) pp. 151-163 utilises an examination of this battle in order to qualify the views of Rambaud (1966).

<sup>272</sup> On the third person perspective of the work see Nousek (2004) pp. 125-138. See also Grillo (2011) on shifting narrative perspectives in the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>273</sup> Görler (1976) p. 113. See 3.1.1-3.1.4. See pp. 280-281 below where Caesar absolves his own responsibilities for this affair.

<sup>274</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 171.

<sup>275</sup> See Grethke (2006) pp. 305-306, 310-311, Weinryb (1988) pp. 267-268.

<sup>276</sup> 3.1.4.

<sup>277</sup> See 3.7.1-3.7.2 where Caesar simply describes his knowledge after the fact.

<sup>278</sup> Caesar does not indicate any level of discomfort with the details that might indicate doubt regarding the actions described. There is no overall military assessment made either, which might otherwise indicate a desire to directly show his own military knowledge.

narrates his own experiences, suggesting a style deliberately chosen for this battle that is not simply a retelling of any report he received.

The style of narration is apparent in the presentation of Galba, who takes on some of the third person role that Caesar normally reserves for himself. The narrative has thoroughly developed the thought processes of Galba, as is evident in a series of rationales he makes for summoning a council. As Caesar states:

...Galba, cum neque opus hibernorum munitionesque plene essent perfectae neque de frumento reliquoque commeatu satis esset provisum, quod deditione facta obsidibusque acceptis nihil de bello timendum existimaverat, consilio celeriter convocato sententias exquirere coepit.<sup>279</sup>

Galba calls a meeting because the fortifications of Octodurus are not complete and there is a lack of provisions.<sup>280</sup> Furthermore, this occurs because he thinks the enemy is suitably cowed, after their surrender and the taking of hostages, actions that lead him to believe that battle is not expected.<sup>281</sup> In this passage Caesar qualifies the rationale for one action, the calling of a council, with another set of reasons regarding the suppression of the enemy, indicating how thoroughly he is concerned to capture the background to Galba's decision making. This complexity is indicative of the presentation style, where the perception and thought processes of the commander at the time are being carefully constructed.

The emphasis on building the narrative around the perception of Galba is evident as information is presented as part of the character's subjective decision-making, planning and observations. This is evident in the preliminary stages of battle, where Caesar takes particular care to present circumstances from within the perspective of the commander.<sup>282</sup> After some initial fighting he describes the placement of winter quarters as follows:

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<sup>279</sup> 3.3.1-3.3.2.

<sup>280</sup> 3.3.1. Görler (1976) p. 113.

<sup>281</sup> 3.3.1.

<sup>282</sup> See also 3.9.3-3.9.8 for the Venetii account, where the confidence of the enemy and the terrain are conflated. This is discussed at pp. 127-129 below. See also the account of Aduatuca addressed at pp. 184-192 below.

Galba secundis aliquot proeliis factis castellisque compluribus eorum expugnatis, missis ad eum undique legatis obsidibusque datis et pace facta constituit cohortes duas in Nantuatibus conlocare et ipse cum reliquis eius legionis cohortibus in vico Veragrorum qui appellatur Octodurus hiemare.<sup>283</sup>

In this passage the action itself is expressed in a series of ablative absolutes, the effect being that these are compounded as a prelude and rationale for the decision-making.<sup>284</sup> These events are preconditions, so that the data is contextualised as part of the thoughts of Galba. Activity is incorporated into the framework that draws attention to the commander's perception.

Caesar illustrates this objective when he describes Galba's thought processes after the battle, which directly references the subordinate's initial thoughts:

Quo proelio facto, quod saepius fortunam temptare Galba nolebat atque alio se in hiberna consilio venisse meminerat, aliis occurrisse rebus videbat, maxime frumenti commeatusque inopia permotus postero die omnibus eius vici aedificiis incensis in provinciam reverti contendit ac nullo hoste prohibente aut iter demorante incolumem legionem in Nantuates, inde in Allobroges perduxit ibique hiemavit.<sup>285</sup>

The return to Galba's initial plan illustrates that the concern is to capture the change in reasoning that circumstances have brought about. The officer came to winter quarters with one plan, but he does not wish to test fortune further. In the assessment of the aftermath, Caesar does not simply describe the activity of the legion or provide his own assessment, instead contextualising it through the main participant. The summation and close to the battle in particular show that the event is being constructed consistent with the style of presentation rather than an objective assessment of the subordinate commander.

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<sup>283</sup> 3.1.4-3.1.5.

<sup>284</sup> See Gotoff (1984) pp. 9-11 on the expressiveness of Caesar's usage of the ablative absolute.

<sup>285</sup> 3.6.4-3.6.5.

The perspective of Galba is not unique, further indicating that the style is based on more than a report of the subordinate, as the approach even extends to the thoughts and rationale of the enemy. As Caesar states about their reasons for attacking:

Id aliquot de causis acciderat, ut subito Galli belli renovandi legionisque opprimendae consilium caperent: primum quod legionem neque eam plenissimam detractis cohortibus duabus et compluribus singillatim, qui commeatus petendi causa missi erant, absentibus, propter paucitatem despiciebant; tum etiam quod propter iniquitatem loci, cum ipsi ex montibus in vallem decurrerent et tela conicerent, ne primum quidem posse impetum suum sustineri existimabant. accedebat, quod suos ab se liberos abstractos obsidum nomine dolebant et Romanos non solum itinerum causa, sed etiam perpetuae possessionis culmina Alpium occupare conari et ea loca finitimae provinciae adiungere sibi persuasum habebant.<sup>286</sup>

This examination is quite thorough and covers the reasons the enemy decide to attack; the background to their motivation quite clear in the description of the hostages taken and the threat of Roman expansion.<sup>287</sup> Their plans regarding the battle are also enunciated, demonstrating that not just motivations but expectations are captured to show their perspective.<sup>288</sup> This level of detail suggests the predominance of narrative choice rather than just reiteration of events in the battle based on the report of Caesar's subordinate.

### Critique and Servius Galba

The extent to which Caesar adheres to the style of narrative adopted is evident as he limits his own presence in the account and there are no overt value judgements that might interfere with the objective of capturing the perception of those described.<sup>289</sup> Caesar may have been at the mercy of his subordinate's report for this battle, but he shows no uncertainty about the details that were provided to him, and if there were

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<sup>286</sup> 3.2.2-3.2.5.

<sup>287</sup> Görler (1976) p. 113 makes this observation.

<sup>288</sup> See also the Nervii above at pp. 66-67.

<sup>289</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 306 refers to Galba's initial "idiocy". This may be a harsh judgement based on the overall presentation of affairs by Caesar. Contrast Welch (1998) p. 93 who states the caution of Galba is praised.

any details he was uncomfortable with he does not address these, instead adopting the viewpoint of the character in his development of the text. This is illustrated by the lack of overt commentary that would indicate an attempt to judge affairs.<sup>290</sup> Elsewhere Caesar as narrator makes overt judgements, such as praise of the Nervii, or critical generalisations regarding Gallic character.<sup>291</sup> In this battle however, the commentary provided only gives general observations that remain within the perspective of the participants. Caesar only provides one overt assessment of affairs when he states: *ita commutata fortuna eos qui in spem potiundorum castrorum venerant, undique circumventos intercipiunt...*<sup>292</sup> This one comment is still tied to the perspective of the Gauls, as it notes the change in their expectations regarding the battle, and the dashing of their hopes.<sup>293</sup> The qualifications provided relate to the perception of the characters, indicating that comments are limited to only broad observations about the state of affairs.

There also does not appear to be any specific criticism of Galba throughout the account, even where such observations might be warranted by the actions described.<sup>294</sup> Caesar states that the enemy surprised the Romans, the words used being: *cum tantum repentini periculi praeter opinionem accidisset.*<sup>295</sup> The use of *accido* suggests that the enemy attack was a happenstance and not necessarily to be predicted.<sup>296</sup> Certainly there is no overt criticism, as this action is most likely to generate a comment, being Galba's failure to recognise the threat before it eventuates.<sup>297</sup> He even passes up the opportunity to review Galba's activities in closing, and simply states when Galba retreats that *...quod saepius fortunam temptare Galba nolebat*, thus not only attributing events to *fortuna* but refusing to qualify

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<sup>290</sup> Contrast Rambaud (1966) pp. 299-300. Rambaud regards the presentation as unfavourable. See McDougall (1991) pp. 624-625. McDougall states that Caesar's representation is overall positive, an assertion that the lack of criticism, and the focus on his perception supports. See also Klaus (1974) p. 156.

<sup>291</sup> See the discussion of Gallic character at 4.5, and the Nervii at 2.27.

<sup>292</sup> 3.6.2. Note this is different to 3.6.4 where the reference to *fortuna* is from the perspective of Galba.

<sup>293</sup> See also 7.80.9.

<sup>294</sup> For an overt judgement about subordinates, see Sabinus discussed at pp. 209-213, the army at 329-335 below, and the army at Gergovia pp. 116-123.

<sup>295</sup> 3.3.2.

<sup>296</sup> The use of the word for a happenstance seems deliberately neutral here.

<sup>297</sup> 3.3.1-3.3.2.

whether Galba's final decision was correct.<sup>298</sup> In this instance the presentation is not specifically designed to highlight culpability.

In particular, the examination of activity at various levels in the passage is not an indicator of critical commentary. At two stages Galba calls his sub-commanders and centurions together; however this is not a criticism of Galba or his command style, as there is none of the dissent and vacillation that is a feature of the Sabinus and Cotta meeting, an incident reported in a more critical manner.<sup>299</sup> Caesar himself makes use of such a council, demonstrating that councils are not indicative of command weakness.<sup>300</sup> In this battle, the meetings are called but the decisions made and outcomes are all successful, and the interaction of commander and subordinates is not a criticism of itself but merely part of the objective of capturing perspectives.

Furthermore, when Caesar wishes to criticise subordinates, he does so clearly, as in the case of Gergovia where he describes the assembly of the army and his own words at the time of the defeat.<sup>301</sup> Consequently the description of subordinates in action in the battle of Octodurus should not be viewed as overt criticism of Galba, as initiative such as that shown by Baculus and Volusenus is certainly approved of when performed in other battles, even expected, and it is not a negative reflection on the commander.<sup>302</sup> Against Ariovistus, Crassus sends in the third line and is instrumental in victory, even though he is in charge of the cavalry, and Labienus' initiative at the battle of the Sabis River is critical in bringing about success.<sup>303</sup> In this context the appearance of subordinates is not an implied criticism of Galba, as they are entitled to act on their own initiative.

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<sup>298</sup> See 3.6.4.

<sup>299</sup> The presentation of Sabinus at 5.30 is in marked contrast, and actual words are placed in his mouth. There is also the threat of physical violence in that meeting at 5.31, and the use of *acriter* to capture the bitterness. See 2.27.1 and 3.23 for other councils. There is no evidence of dissent or that Galba is not in control of this meeting.

<sup>300</sup> See British invasion 4.23.5-4.23.6.

<sup>301</sup> 7.52. Even in that case the criticism is delivered from the perspective of Caesar as character. See also the forces of Quintus Cicero discussed at pp. 164-165 below.

<sup>302</sup> Klaus (1974) p. 159. See 6.38 for Baculus taking the initiative to seal a gate. See 4.25 for an aquilifer in Britain leading the attack. On the "Baculus-topos" see Gerlinger (2008) p. 157, Richter (1977) p. 128.

<sup>303</sup> See 1.52.7, 2.26.4-2.27.1. See also 5.48 for approval of a decision of Crassus.

Caesar eschews the opportunity to pass these judgements and while some of the audience may find criticism in Galba's apparent failures, Caesar also gives the reasons that Galba was not expecting any attack, not so much providing an active defence as relating the factors that capture the character's perception of affairs. Galba is given good reasons from his own perspective for not expecting an attack, as hostages have been taken and peace made.<sup>304</sup> This is most evident in *pace facta*, the final of the ablative absolutes before Galba goes to quarters, which is not qualified as apparent or superficial.<sup>305</sup> Caesar does not even criticise him overtly when an entire village of Gauls is able to sneak off without being noticed or caught, only that this occurred without early observation.<sup>306</sup> There is no qualification and the passage flatly assumes Galba's perspective, as the primary objective is to maintain the style of narration of adopted.

The emphasis on the characters at the expense of objective assessment is clear in the language Caesar uses to describe activity in the battle. He phrases goals in terms of subjective Roman hopes, not the final result.<sup>307</sup> The initial plan of the Romans to escape is described twice in terms of safety, and there is no mention of victory or overcoming the enemy.<sup>308</sup> Similarly the decision to defend the camp is described as: *maiori tamen parti placuit hoc reservato ad extremum consilio interim rei eventum experiri et castra defendere*.<sup>309</sup> The use of *experiri* is important as it captures the doubt of the defenders regarding the issue.<sup>310</sup> The choice of words is also apparent in the plan of Baculus and Volusenus, which is described in terms of hope and uncertainty, when Caesar states: *...ad Galbam adcurrunt atque unam esse spem salutis docent, si eruptione facta extremum auxilium experirentur*.<sup>311</sup> He even repeats himself, stating again that all hope was placed in *virtus*.<sup>312</sup> The phrasing of their aims demonstrates that the passage captures the perspective of the men rather than focussing only on an objective victory.

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<sup>304</sup> 3.1.4, 3.3.1.

<sup>305</sup> 3.1.4. Note that this could be seen as a defence of Galba's decision to winter here, as the enemy has been subdued.

<sup>306</sup> 3.2.1-3.2.2. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 157, Richter (1977) p. 137.

<sup>307</sup> See generally Nousek (2004) p. 69.

<sup>308</sup> 3.3.3. Even the summation of the enemy plans is described in terms of hope (*spem*) indicating how the concept extends to both sides in the affair. See 3.6.2.

<sup>309</sup> 3.3.4.

<sup>310</sup> Caesar uses this of the Nervii at 2.16.3-2.16.4, in terms of them persuading their allies to fight.

<sup>311</sup> 3.5.2-3.5.3.

<sup>312</sup> 3.5.3.

Any message arises from the implicit nature of affairs even when comment might be expected by the opinions expressed therein. Caesar does not qualify, or even discuss, whether the Gauls are right to be angry about the taking of captives, and he does not even attempt to deny their accusations of Roman expansionism.<sup>313</sup> This apparent failure to answer a charge of Roman expansion that Caesar himself places in the text is crucial, as it shows that an implicit criticism arising from the representation of enemy motives is unqualified by overt observations.<sup>314</sup> While he probably expects a refutation to be self-evident to a Roman audience, nevertheless his lack of qualification indicates that the major concern is to capture the state of mind of the enemy, and let criticism arise from the expectations of the audience.<sup>315</sup> While the audience may provide the interpretation, the predominance of style over assessment indicates that this passage is not simply a report or assessment of the events described.

### The Narrative Pattern to Battle

There is evidence of a cycle based on the dissociation, and re-establishment of the will of the commander with his commands, a pattern that suggests the presence of a cycle that determines the overall shape of the narrative.<sup>316</sup> Caesar opens his account by describing that Galba decided to winter at Octodurus, and the decision is enough for an audience to presume that the orders he gives are carried out, as illustrated in the statement: *...constituit cohortes duas in Nantuatibus conlocare et ipse cum reliquis eius legionis cohortibus in vico Veragrorum qui appellatur Octodurus hiemare.*<sup>317</sup> The expression of Galba's desire is enough to capture activity, since the work of the men is ascribed to the commander in *eum locum vallo fossaque munivit.*<sup>318</sup> In the

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<sup>313</sup> 3.2.5. Grillo (2011) p. 246.

<sup>314</sup> This thesis notes the presence of several instances where such comments go unanswered in the text, as this is an internally consistent approach. See also pp. 325-326 below for the case of Dumnorix, where Caesar lets such claims stand without overt comment on his part. This does not indicate that the audience is expected to agree with their view.

<sup>315</sup> See also Vercingetorix discussed at pp. 261-263 below.

<sup>316</sup> For discussion on overall ring composition see Torigian (1998) p. 57, Nousek (2004) pp. 60-82. For Nousek, in composing the work Caesar made the breakdown and re-establishment of order a structural aspect of the entire work.

<sup>317</sup> 3.1.4-3.1.5.

<sup>318</sup> See 3.1.6. This is a technique he has used of himself, such as in the construction of the Rhine Bridge at 4.17.3-4.17.10. See pp. 215-219 below.



implicit association of command and result, the battle opens with the will of the commander and the action being synchronous.

Throughout the battle however, this connection breaks down, and the motivation of others, such as those of the Gauls and subordinates are emphasised. Two crucial decisions, the one to defend and the other to sally, are described only once the intermediary description of a meeting is interposed.<sup>319</sup> Furthermore, decisions made are presented through an examination of the subordinates on the Roman side. At the critical point in the battle, when the enemy are pressing hard, Caesar describes the actions of Baculus and Volusenus, who present an option to turn the crisis around.<sup>320</sup> He provides personal details of the two officers so that there is no doubt as to who came up with the idea, crediting the two men and ensuring that the source of decision making and the origin of the plan are all included. The level of detail provided regarding the sources of the plan suggests there is a pattern that highlights the loss of control by the commander, as his will alone is not enough to secure results.

Importantly, at the crisis, Caesar states that what was willed became actuality. When he describes the sally with the words: *quod iussi sunt, faciunt*, he specifically records the moment that the commander's desire leads to a successful outcome, thereby establishing that what was decided actually occurred.<sup>321</sup> The statement is indicative of a structure that captures the dichotomy between expectation and result, by specifically defining when one leads to the other as order is restored. This structural element is then resolved in the final commands given by Galba, where the relationship between commander and action is re-established:

Maxime frumenti commeatusque inopia permotus postero die omnibus eius vici aedificiis incensis in provinciam reverti contendit ac nullo hoste prohibente aut iter demorante incolumem legionem in Nantuates, inde in Allobroges perduxit ibique hiemavit.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> 3.5.3 and 3.3.1.

<sup>320</sup> 3.5.2-3.5.3.

<sup>321</sup> 3.6.1.

<sup>322</sup> 3.6.4-3.6.5.

The condensation of thought and action is evident again; Galba's personal actions and motivation and the activity of the legion are synchronous. The similarity between opening and end suggests a cycle to the narrative that focuses on the loss of control and its later return once the commander's will is enough to secure results. In doing so this cycle supports the artistic purpose of contextualising the battle from the perspective of this major participant.

Caesar also includes incidental details when they support this objective. As noted above, the theme of safety is strong in the passage, as reflected the objectives attributed to the Romans, and the language used to describe those objectives.<sup>323</sup> As the fighting closes, he specifically states that: *sic omnibus hostium copiis fuis armisque exutis se intra munitiones suas recipiunt*.<sup>324</sup> The mention of the enemy arms is unusual, and not a common feature of battle narratives except when, as in the case of the Aduatuci, the pile of arms is used to illustrate the perfidy and the warlike nature of the enemy.<sup>325</sup> Nevertheless, the disarming of the battlefield near the end of the passage, as the men return to their fortifications, evokes the idea of safety.<sup>326</sup> In addition, Caesar continues the account to focus on Galba's concern for safety, evident in the use of *incolumem legionem* to describe the forces he leads out.<sup>327</sup> The account follows events through to the conclusion that best encapsulates the desires of the participants, demonstrating that at least one character's motivation for safety is highly influential in determining a cyclic structure to the narrative.

### Elaboration in the Narrative

The emphasis on the perception of the characters fundamentally determines the course of the confrontation described. To capture this perception, Caesar sometimes elaborates on details peripheral to an explanation of the actual course of the battle,

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<sup>323</sup> See also above p. 91, below p. 99.

<sup>324</sup> 3.6.3-3.6.4. The reference to despoiling arms at 5.51.4 is less explicit.

<sup>325</sup> See pp. 185-187 below on the Aduatuci at 2.32.4.

<sup>326</sup> The lack of arms mentioned in the victory at Alesia suggests this is not included to indicate victory, nor associated with a *tropaeum*.

<sup>327</sup> 3.6.5. This is in spite of the actual casualties that the Romans must have suffered. See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 112-113.

such as the decision, which is ultimately rejected, to attempt escape from the enemy:<sup>328</sup>

Quo in consilio, cum tantum repentini periculi praeter opinionem accidisset ac iam omnia fere superiora loca multitudine armatorum completa conspicerentur neque subsidio venire neque commeatus supportari interclusis itineribus possent, prope iam desperata salute nonnullae huiusmodi sententiae dicebantur, ut impedimentis relictis eruptione facta isdem itineribus, quibus eo pervenissent, ad salutem contenderent. maiori tamen parti placuit hoc reservato ad extremum consilio interim rei eventum experiri et castra defendere.<sup>329</sup>

This passage relates the option to escape in significant detail, describing the eruption from the camp and the direction in which the Romans would attempt escape. Visualisation of the theoretical flight is encouraged in the statement that the baggage would be left behind, thus giving enough detail to ensure it is a clear possibility.<sup>330</sup> Details give the option force and capture the desperation of such a choice, stating that it would have been taken *desperata salute*, imbuing the content of the meeting with the force of the rejected option.<sup>331</sup> Nevertheless while this decision to escape may represent the content of the meeting held, it is not carried through.<sup>332</sup> The decision which is actually followed is described only briefly as *interim rei eventum experiri et castra defendere*.<sup>333</sup> While the rejected decision is that of the minority and never eventuated, the details evoke a mood of desperation that captures the plight of the defenders. By giving such force to a decision that was ultimately not carried out, Caesar more effectively captures the objectives of the characters described.

Caesar also brings within his scope events that occurred outside the battle itself, when these enhance the style of narration. He describes the reasons for Gallic belligerence at the point in the narrative where they have been placed on the battlefield, looming

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<sup>328</sup> See also 5.28, where the decision not followed grants Caesar the opportunity to address his opinion that Sabinus and Cotta should have stayed in the camp. See pp. 209-213, 335-339 below.

<sup>329</sup> 3.3.2-3.3.4.

<sup>330</sup> See Lodge (1930) pp. 185-186 who discusses the visual element in Caesar's narratives.

<sup>331</sup> 3.3.3.

<sup>332</sup> 3.3.4. See Klaus (1974) p. 156. Barthes (1970) p. 153 states that "historical discourse is never anything but assertive; we relate what happened not what didn't happen". While the content of the meeting is assertive, what is being evoked is a set of circumstances that did not.

<sup>333</sup> 3.3.4.

over the defenders and about to attack.<sup>334</sup> However the description of their motivation relates to factors that occurred prior to the attack, including the build-up of resentment at the Roman presence, the taking of hostages and Gallic intelligence gathering.<sup>335</sup> None of this is described prior to the confrontation; instead Caesar incorporates it into the state of mind of the protagonists as they appear on the battlefield. The extent to which motivation is designed to develop the narrative structure of the passage is apparent as it diverges greatly from other accounts, such as the Helvetian campaign in Book One, in which the motivation of the enemy is clearly described prior to the battle itself.<sup>336</sup> In the Octodurus narrative both motivation and expectations become part of a pattern to the battle in the interests of capturing the participants' perspective of events.

Content is not just included but also removed for effect, and information regarding physical circumstances disappears once it has served the aims of the passage. This is evident in Galba's decision to fortify the village.<sup>337</sup>

Cum hic in duas partes flumine divideretur, alteram partem eius vici Gallis ad hiemandum concessit, alteram vacuum ab his relictam cohortibus attribuit.<sup>338</sup>

Caesar includes terrain, such as the river, in the description as it forms part of Galba's preparations for camp, however the river does not feature in the rest of the account.<sup>339</sup> Similarly, the village is mentioned as the location of the winter quarters, however the presence of buildings that could interrupt the fortifications, catch fire, or serve as refuge are not mentioned in the battle itself.<sup>340</sup> Importantly, Caesar states that the defences are only partly completed when describing Galba's motivation, however the partially completed fortifications have no discernible effect in battle and their

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<sup>334</sup> 3.2.1.

<sup>335</sup> This extends the focalization that Nousek (2004) notes at p. 69 to include the enemy. See also 6.8.1 for another example of enemy perception, discussed at pp. 207-208 below.

<sup>336</sup> See 1.2-1.5, 1.30-31, 2.1, 4.3-4.4, 7.1, 7.4 for examples.

<sup>337</sup> This is similar to the way legions disappear at 2.28. See pp. 201-204 below.

<sup>338</sup> 3.1.6.

<sup>339</sup> 3.1.6. The waterway is a *flumen*, which, as with all Caesar's watercourses, is generic and could indicate a small or large feature. Kraus (2005b) p. 243.

<sup>340</sup> Contrast the inclusion of buildings at 5.43, mentioned specifically in order to describe the discipline of the defenders. This is discussed below at p. 337-338.

incomplete nature is not mentioned again.<sup>341</sup> Major aspects of the defensive landscape that are covered as part of Galba's reasoning are not included in the description of combat, illustrating that information is discarded when it does not capture the perception of the participants.

Similarly, Caesar omits information regarding the preparations for battle in favour of the defender's objectives. He reports that there is scarcely time to prepare for combat in the result clause: *...vix ut rebus quas constituissent conlocandis atque administrandis tempus daretur...*<sup>342</sup> Important historical information may have been omitted as he excludes whether there were any unusual preparations required due to the topography, short time frame, or incomplete fortifications.<sup>343</sup> Nevertheless, the sentence covers the objectives of the defenders, and the use of *conlocandis* and *administrandis* are strong but indefinite actions considering the undefined *rebus*.<sup>344</sup> Caesar is selectively specific, favouring the things that had to be done over the actions themselves, thereby emphasising the participants and their objectives.

Even details regarding the participants disappear when they are no longer required. *Virtus* is a characteristic envisaged as part of the plan to sally out, Caesar stating of Galba's orders that: *omnem spem salutis in virtute ponerent*.<sup>345</sup> While this statement shows that the quality was a contributing factor in the victory that followed, the idea is not developed in the description of combat.<sup>346</sup> *Virtus* remains an implicit concept only, and while regarded as important, no elaboration occurs at the tactical level.

Importantly, Caesar replaces an examination of *virtus* with the expectations of the enemy, indicating that the priority is for perspectives unrelated to the minutiae of

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<sup>341</sup> 3.3.1.

<sup>342</sup> 3.4.1.

<sup>343</sup> The importance of this statement is that Galba's objective of fortification had not been completed.

<sup>344</sup> In this case the gerundives denote necessity quite forcefully. See also pp. 252-253 and how Caesar's orders are undefined.

<sup>345</sup> 3.5.3.

<sup>346</sup> 3.6.2. This qualifies the view of Lendon (1999) pp. 318-319, who regards Caesar's narratives as deterministically driven towards *virtus*. In this instance Caesar abandons *virtus* in his explanation of the fighting. See pp. 201-204 below. On the etymological meaning of *virtus* see Riggsby (2006) pp. 83-96.

combat.<sup>347</sup> As the Romans sally, physical details are subordinated to the concept that the desires of the enemy do not eventuate:

...neque cognoscendi quid fieret neque sui colligendi hostibus facultatem relinquunt. ita commutata fortuna eos qui in spem potiundorum castrorum venerant, undique circumventos intercipiunt...<sup>348</sup>

Rather than describe the physical effect of the attack, Caesar concentrates on the effect it has on their ability to react mentally, through the use of *cognoscendi*.<sup>349</sup> More importantly he sums up that the situation they expected has now been reversed; the use of *spem* being important because it phrases the defeat in terms of their initial plans.<sup>350</sup> The description of their mental state shows that the perception of the characters predominates, and actually replaces, information regarding the actual destruction of the enemy.

The narrative often entirely omits content that does not capture the subjective experience of the participants. Caesar states that prior to the battle Galba fought several initial engagements in the region, but passes this over with the statement: *Galba secundis aliquot proeliis factis castellisque compluribus eorum expugnatis*.<sup>351</sup> These battles and assaults represent a whole range of important campaign information, such as how thoroughly the enemy were beaten and how secure Galba made the region prior to encampment, yet he does not elaborate on them as they only reflect objective information regarding the campaign itself.<sup>352</sup> The selectivity indicates that the style of narrative selected has created omissions regarding the strategic background to the conflict.

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<sup>347</sup> A similar refutation of enemy expectations is the rebuttal of Ariovistus' boasts through combat narrative, discussed at pp. 146-161 below.

<sup>348</sup> 3.6.1.

<sup>349</sup> It is also possible that *sui colligendi* refers to their mental wellbeing. There is an interesting ambiguity in the phrase that could indicate their physical resources (OLD 6), or their mental faculties (OLD 17a) and the idea of "getting themselves together". See Cicero *de Orat.* 1.24 *colligendi sui causa*.

<sup>350</sup> On the reversal of circumstance initially favourable to the enemy see Erickson (2002) p. 612.

<sup>351</sup> 3.1.4.

<sup>352</sup> See also the Venetii account discussed at pp. 126-145 below.

### The Description of Combat

An effect of Caesar's style of narration is that combat is presented from within the perceptual framework of the combatants, showing that objective information regarding combat has been incorporated into the overall style of the account.<sup>353</sup> One major example is a refusal to engage with the physical circumstances of the fighting, presumably as these do not reflect the state of mind of the participants. Combat is given only a very general character, as Caesar only wishes to capture progress in the broadest terms. This is evident generally throughout the battle, where combat is not described in detail, but is most striking in the initial attack.<sup>354</sup> He describes the enemy as attacking *ex omnibus partibus*, which would indicate an attack from across the river as well.<sup>355</sup> However the presence of enemies attempting to cross the stream, or attacking from within the uninhabited part of the town are all absent in the account. Similarly the Gallic assault is stated in only the most general of terms, with information absent, such as which walls the enemy attack.<sup>356</sup> This brevity relates to activity that occurs for a long time, which in this instance is described as six hours.<sup>357</sup> However the summarisation suggests that as these details are all objective data, and do not illuminate the state of mind of either side, they have only been summarised briefly.

Furthermore the subjective viewpoint is used to capture more immediate tactical information, such as the manoeuvres of the enemy prior to combat. This is apparent in the meeting of the Roman commanders, where background information is provided as follows:

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<sup>353</sup> Nousek (2004) p. 69.

<sup>354</sup> This is apparent in the sally by the Romans, which is given no spatial reference apart from the movement from the gates and the surrounding of the Gauls. See 3.6.1-3.6.3.

<sup>355</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.2.

<sup>356</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.4.

<sup>357</sup> The reference to time is at 3.5.1. See below at pp. 104-105. See also 1.26.1-1.26.3 on the Helvetii and time in that battle.

...quo in consilio, cum tantum repentini periculi praeter opinionem accidisset ac iam omnia fere superiora loca multitudine armatorum completa conspicerentur neque subsidio veniri neque commeatus supportari interclusis itineribus possent...<sup>358</sup>

Caesar focuses the approach of the enemy through the eyes of the defenders with the use of *conspicerentur*, illustrating that the arrival of the enemy and the cutting off of escape are visualised subjectively.<sup>359</sup> By introducing movement and tactical data through this subjective viewpoint, he demonstrates that the actual manoeuvres in the battle are presented according to the characters.

Important activities on the battlefield such as commands are also presented in this manner. While this is apparent at the start in the foraging activity, which is presented as part of a command using *iussisset*, the most striking example of Caesar's style is apparent in his narration of the Roman sally.<sup>360</sup> Prior to the sally he describes the preparation as part of a command, stating:

Itaque convocatis centurionibus celeriter milites certiores facit, paulisper intermitterent proelium ac tantummodo tela missa exciperent seque ex labore reficerent, post dato signo e castris erumperent atque omnem spem salutis in virtute ponerent.<sup>361</sup>

The action of recuperating and conserving ammunition is captured as part of Galba's orders, the subjunctives *intermitterent*, *exciperent* and *reficerent* being indirect commands introduced by *certiores facit*. As the subjunctives *erumperent* and *ponerent* also cover the actual sally, they demonstrate that the reporting of command substitutes for narration of the movement of men in the battle.

The objective of capturing Galba's perspective is clear as the sally itself is only described in basic terms, Caesar stating: *Quod iussi sunt, faciunt ac subito omnibus portis eruptione facta neque cognoscendi quid fieret neque sui colligendi hostibus*

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<sup>358</sup> 3.3.2-3.3.3.

<sup>359</sup> Note also way the enemy move up is given three times in the passage, similar to the manner Caesar narrates the Nervii confrontation with a series of approaches. The similarity suggests a common literary approach to battle. See above at p. 68.

<sup>360</sup> See 3.2.1. *Cum dies hibernorum complures transissent frumentumque eo comportari iussisset.*

<sup>361</sup> 3.5.3.



*facultatem relinquunt*.<sup>362</sup> While he provides some detail, such as the use of the gates, the summary that the men did as they were commanded serves to replace the action implicit in the initial command.<sup>363</sup> This emphasis on the command over the actual action demonstrates the integration of the descriptive into the subjective perspective.

Even when Caesar provides purely descriptive information he illustrates the objective of capturing the subjective experience of the characters through the context in which the information is provided. The narration of the main enemy attack is the most objective description within the battle, with little or no focus through the perception of the participants.<sup>364</sup> Nevertheless it still fits within the overall thematic framework.<sup>365</sup> The unique character of the section is evident in the description as follows:

Brevi spatio interiecto, vix ut rebus quas constituissent conlocandis atque administrandis tempus daretur, hostes ex omnibus partibus signo dato decurrere, lapides gaesaque in vallum conicere. nostri primo integris viribus fortiter repugnare neque ullum frustra telum ex loco superiore mittere, ut quaeque pars castrorum nudata defensoribus premi videbatur, eo occurrere et auxilium ferre, sed hoc superari quod diuturnitate pugnae hostes defessi proelio excedebant, alii integris viribus succedebant; quarum rerum a nostris propter paucitatem fieri nihil poterat, ac non modo defesso ex pugna excedendi, sed ne saucio quidem eius loci ubi constiterat relinquendi ac sui recipiendi facultas dabatur.<sup>366</sup>

The unusual nature of the passage is indicated by its stylistic isolation, framed within the similarity of the framing words *daretur...dabatur*.<sup>367</sup> The use of the historic infinitive to describe the onrush of the enemy is at variance with most of the battle, which is largely narrated using third person singular or plural forms to describe the

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<sup>362</sup> 3.6.1-3.6.2. Note also the vividness of the historic present in *faciunt*.

<sup>363</sup> 3.6.1. See pp. 215-220 below on will and action. Kraus (2009) p. 161 notes this is not unique to Caesar.

<sup>364</sup> See also the Venetii battle discussed at pp. 138-141.

<sup>365</sup> Effectively this passage is isolated within the focalized episode that is noted by Nousek (2004) p. 69.

<sup>366</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.4.

<sup>367</sup> See Weinryb, (1988) p. 278. Weinryb states that when a text removes all allusions to the narrator it seems as if objective historical reality presents itself, as if events speak for themselves.

actions of individuals or groups.<sup>368</sup> In marked contrast to the rest of the narrative, Caesar's style in this passage is distinctly descriptive, and it's somewhat exceptional nature at variance with the dominance of perception in the rest of the account.

In spite of the distinct nature of the descriptive passage, the events described are contained within the framework of decisions made by the participants. The passage follows on immediately from the vote by the Romans to fight, placing it as a consequence of that decision. Caesar is even clear that the attack described comes so swiftly that there is barely time to act on the decision, demonstrating that the subjective decision of the defenders is used to contextualise the fighting that follows.<sup>369</sup> Most importantly, the adoption of a descriptive passage serves to contextualise and explain the circumstances, adding a sense of urgency and desperation in which the decisions and thoughts of the defenders appear. While the passage is isolated stylistically, it nevertheless occurs within a sequence where the subjective experience of the combatants dominates the structure.

Moreover, the combat passage forms preconditions to which individuals respond, and Baculus and Volusenus propose their option to break out of the camp as a response to the action described. The description continues as follows:

Cum iam amplius horis sex continenter pugnaretur ac non solum vires, sed etiam tela nostros deficerent atque hostes acrius instarent languidioribusque nostris vallum scindere et fossas complere coepissent resque esset iam ad extremum perducta casum...<sup>370</sup>

An extended *cum* clause describes the state of the defence, indicating that the action described in it is antecedent to the actions of Baculus and Volusenus. The details provided, such as the lack of missile weapons, the tiredness of the Romans, and the enemy pressing closely and breaking up the fortifications, are all descriptive. However their presentation within the *cum* clause indicates that they are preconditions

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<sup>368</sup> See the use of *repugnare* and *mittere*. There are exceptions i.e. the use of *acciderat* at 3.2.2. This third person impersonal verb does not change the emphasis on the individuals.

<sup>369</sup> This may explain why Caesar uses a generic description for the defence plans, as the importance is that there is little time to make the decision. See 3.4.1.

<sup>370</sup> 3.5.1-3.5.2.

to the plan of Baculus and Volusenus for survival.<sup>371</sup> The choice of presentation indicates that information is presented within a framework where it is consequent to, or a precondition for examination of the perceptual aspect of the battle.

Caesar gives other indicators that the descriptive passages are primarily transitional between one decision and another. The fight itself is framed by the repetition of *integriis viribus* to describe first the Romans, then the Gauls.<sup>372</sup> This is not simply economy of words, but defines combat in terms of a change of advantage from one side to the other. The repetition indicates the reversal of circumstances between the initial discussion to defend the camp, and the current state of affairs, which leads to the second meeting.<sup>373</sup> The repetition helps to mark the boundaries and to place the descriptive elements within the pattern of meetings and decisions.

The dominance of the perceptual objective means that Caesar also does not explain when the perspective of the participants and the progress of the battle conflict. This is evident in the dichotomy between the enemy plans and unfolding events. The enemy base their decision to attack in part on their ability to rush down and hurl weapons against the fortifications from above:

...tum etiam quod propter iniquitatem loci, cum ipsi ex montibus in vallem decurrerent et tela conicerent, ne primum quidem posse impetum suum sustineri existimabant.<sup>374</sup>

This plan does not seem to occur in actuality, as the Romans are able to hold up the enemy for at least six hours, and it is never explained why the *impetus* is held up for so long.<sup>375</sup> Caesar makes no explanation for the huge discrepancy between the enemy plan and the actual conflict, or why the enemy are so wrong.<sup>376</sup> Any link between plan

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<sup>371</sup> 3.5.1.

<sup>372</sup> 3.4.2, 3.4.3. On style and repetition regarding the Helvetii battle see Williams (1985) p. 224 and see below at pp. 170-177. The repetition there is to reflect exhaustion.

<sup>373</sup> 3.3.1, 3.5.3.

<sup>374</sup> 3.2.4-3.2.5.

<sup>375</sup> Note the use of *impetus* here, where the use of the word for an attack on a fixed position suggests that it is not technical jargon. See Lendon (1999) p. 285, who regards the word as a specific military term. Also note the accusative infinitive construction governed by *existimabant* to illustrate that this is their opinion.

<sup>376</sup> Ramage (2003) pp. 338-339, fn. 27 notes that with few exceptions the *consilia* of the enemy are unsuccessful.

and action is only implied, as his interest appears to be in the motivation of the enemy, which does not extend to explaining when these plans are not reflected in the battle itself. Furthermore, the *iniquitatem* of the battlefield implies a detriment to the defenders, due to the location of the fort.<sup>377</sup> However this detriment has no bearing on combat when the Romans sally out, and what was seen as relevant at the start is not explained at the end.<sup>378</sup> More critical is that it is actually the Romans who have a height advantage in the battle, Caesar stating: *neque ullam frustra telum ex loco superiore mittere*.<sup>379</sup> The terrain serves a function in explaining the decisions and attitudes of the participants but is not reflected in the progress of the battle, illustrating that the narrative is not constructed to explain such details.

The predominance of perception creates another internal inconsistency as Caesar is not primarily concerned with the physical topography of the battlefield. He initially states that Galba fortified the camp with ramp and ditch, capturing the decision to encamp and prepare for winter through the use of *munivit*, a word which also suggests that the fortifications were completed.<sup>380</sup> However he later states that the fortifications were not complete when describing Galba's reasons for calling a meeting.<sup>381</sup> Both of these statements reflect the will of the commander, or decisions made at the time that they appear in the narrative. They also indicate no compulsion to consistently represent the status of the fort.<sup>382</sup> The physical status of the fortifications is only referenced when it has a bearing on explaining Galba's choices, meaning that the actual state of the fortifications is not clear.<sup>383</sup>

The difficulty of reconstructing the battle is evident as the account prevents a thorough examination of the circumstances of victory. The idea that the superior force of Gauls is surrounded is explicit in *circumventos*, but that the Romans manage to

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<sup>377</sup> 3.2.4. Caesar objectively describes the camp as at a lower elevation at 3.1.5. See Lendon (1999) p. 302 who regards *iniquitus* as more of a technical terrain description. Note that even if the detriment is psychological, it has no effect on the sally.

<sup>378</sup> 3.6.1-3.6.3.

<sup>379</sup> 3.4.2.

<sup>380</sup> 3.1.6.

<sup>381</sup> 3.3.1.

<sup>382</sup> Even if the ditch and parapet were completed in the first instance but other defensive works not done, the presentation is not designed to clarify this for the audience.

<sup>383</sup> See also the use of the walls of Avaricum at 7.23, the fortifications of the Aduatuci at 2.29 and the Fortifications of the Britons at 5.21. These are discussed at pp. 186-187, 166-167, 295-296.

achieve this with vastly inferior numbers not explained.<sup>384</sup> Caesar does not explain how a legion depleted of two cohorts is effectively able to surround a vastly superior force, and the enemy is merely described as *undique circumventus*.<sup>385</sup> While a partisan Roman audience might see the victory as a result of the *virtus* of the Romans, Caesar does not describe how the men are able to move out while under attack and achieve this result. Reconstruction of the circumstances is not possible, as he limits the description of physical manoeuvres in his account.

The presentation also creates difficulty reconstructing an accurate temporal picture of historical events, illustrated in the meeting of the Roman commanders. In the first meeting Caesar raises the possibility of flight, however the enemy attack almost immediately afterwards.<sup>386</sup> As he states, there was scarcely time to prepare for the defence of the camp.<sup>387</sup> Whether there was time to actually organise a breakout and retreat to safety is unclear, as the enemy attacked so quickly that just organising the defence was a challenge.<sup>388</sup> Whether the Romans actually had any options at this time is unclear as there is no explanation of this temporal issue.

When Caesar does include contextual information he sometimes struggles to incorporate this into his objective, demonstrating that the insertion of objective data can be discordant with his general approach. This is evident in the description of enemy casualties, the rout of the enemy being stated in the following manner:

...ex hominum milibus amplius triginta, quem numerum barbarorum ad castra venisse constabat, plus tertia parte interfecta reliquos perterritos in fugam coniciunt ac ne in locis quidem superioribus consistere patiuntur.<sup>389</sup>

In this instance the narrative shifts from the perspective and aims of the participants to an objective assessment of the casualties, in order to give a numeric value to the

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<sup>384</sup> See the topos of the enemy horde addressed above at pp. 71-88. See also 5.51.4 for another example of a sally described only briefly.

<sup>385</sup> 3.6.2. See 3.1.4 for the removal of the two cohorts to the territory of the Nantuates. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 112. Rambaud (1966) p. 193 regards it as a falsification.

<sup>386</sup> 3.3.3.

<sup>387</sup> 3.4.1.

<sup>388</sup> See Klaus (1974) pp. 160-161.

<sup>389</sup> 3.6.2-3.6.3.

victory. In doing so Caesar breaks the temporal consistency, by not providing a contextually or perceptually consistent background to the figure.<sup>390</sup> This radical departure from the format of the passage as a whole may be evidence that he struggles to smoothly include an objective numerical assessment, and that the casualty list clashes with his overall narrative approach.<sup>391</sup> He is required to change his technique to account for it, as a narrative based on character perception and such details are not always complementary.

The lack of general engagement at the level of objective commentary demonstrates that Caesar has a distinct stylistic plan for the battle that is not simply a report of the historical event.<sup>392</sup> The battle is only marginally related to the overall progress of the campaign, which presents an opportunity to create a more literary scheme for the events.<sup>393</sup> The attention drawn to the perspective of the participants is an artistic choice, one that demonstrates the objective is not elucidation at a purely military level, since it occurs at the expense of information relevant to the reconstruction of the confrontation. The battle narrative is an artistic creation, where the individual elements are selected for their relevance to the thematic and literary concerns of the passage, and these concerns determine the content, the structure, and the language used when writing and placing the battle in the commentary.<sup>394</sup> The manner in which Caesar structures the account with precedence given to the subjective experience of the characters suggests that he is motivated strongly by the style of presentation in his choice of content, and that this concern informs the text more than an objective accounting of the progress of the battle, or an assessment of his subordinate's action and the veracity of the actions described.

While the notion that Caesar would be compelled to reconstruct battle according to the needs of military reporting is difficult to determine, the criteria by which he constructs his accounts for reception are much clearer, through an examination of the relationships that exist in the text. Literary and stylistic designs are apparent in the

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<sup>390</sup> Compare Caesar's approach to numbers evident in the catalogue of the Belgae 2.4.1-2.4.10 and the census of the Helvetii 1.29.1-1.29.3 which are both delivered from the perspective of Caesar as character.

<sup>391</sup> Note also the isolation of descriptive elements of the battle above at pp. 104-105.

<sup>392</sup> Nousek (2004) p. 69.

<sup>393</sup> The battle and the campaign are not referenced again after 3.7.1.

<sup>394</sup> On overall structure, see Nousek (2004) p. 60.

description of battle, the context in which it is portrayed, and the narrative structure. The objective of evoking a reaction from the audience is evident in the account of the Helvetii and the Nervii, where the overall pattern of description is designed to generate a feeling of suspense. The effect of a literary scheme is present in the confrontation with the Belgae, where the topos of the multitude replaces a more detailed account of the event. However the extent to which Caesar's construction of battle narrative varies from a reconstruction of historical events is particularly evident in the Octodurus passage, where a shift in narrative style in order to portray the characters has a fundamental effect on the manner in which the battle is constructed. These considerations are a core concern in the battle narratives and, as demonstrated, fundamentally influence the choice of content and the manner of presentation. The studies of this chapter therefore indicate how far Caesar's battles diverge from a reconstruction of combat in order to influence the reception of the text. The rest of this thesis examines the persuasive role of battle narrative, and that narrative strategies are utilised so that battle supports or creates impressions favourable to Caesar, or his interpretation of the characters and events described.

## CHAPTER 2: PERSUASION AND BATTLE NARRATIVE

In Chapter One it was illustrated that Caesar's battle narratives are much more sophisticated than simple reports of battle, as in the process of creating the narrative stylistic choices determine the content of the passage. This chapter demonstrates that Caesar uses these battlefield descriptions to influence the audience's understanding of the passage, whether this is to address a stated purpose for the account, or through the creation of an implicit interpretation using the military data presented.<sup>1</sup> Dixon states we might call Caesar's style Roman factual reporting, the "steady use of retrospective summary, the runs of parallel subordinate clauses, the step by step nature of the campaign account".<sup>2</sup> However an ostensibly factual reporting style does not preclude the creation of a persuasive narrative, and Damon notes that in the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar persuades through simple language even though he does not have long, complex sentences that appear to have the purpose of persuading a reluctant reader.<sup>3</sup> This chapter illustrates that there is a persuasive element embedded in the narrative of battle that either supports the meaning of the overall episode, or in a manner similar to the observations of Barthes and Woodman, creates one through the choice of content provided.<sup>4</sup> Support of a stated objective is apparent in the otherwise very brief account of the defeat of the Tigurini, which shows that detail are provided to interpret the battle as an act of vengeance.<sup>5</sup> A more subtle technique is used in the siege of Gergovia, where the objective of blaming the soldiers for the defeat is clear, but *exempla* and anecdotes are used to support this understanding.<sup>6</sup> Numbers also play a

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to recognise that the battles examined in this chapter are included for their demonstration of Caesar's techniques, and the objectives they address are also suitable to later chapters of the thesis. For example, Caesar's description of the naval campaign against the Venetii is highly defensive in nature, as he had difficulties in conclusively defeating the enemy. The case study is therefore applicable to Chapter Five, which looks at other battles where Caesar explains his conduct of campaigns such as the first invasion of Britain. Similarly, the battle against Ariovistus has a self-promotional objective, as it proves Caesar's contempt for the enemy reputation, a topic addressed in Chapter Four. These battles are examined in the current chapter as they are particular illustrative of Caesar's techniques in meeting his objectives, and are their presence not indicative of a lack of other objectives.

<sup>2</sup> Dixon (1992) p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Damon (1994) pp. 184-195. At p. 185 Damon notes how this leaves interpretation up to the audience.

<sup>4</sup> See Barthes (1970) pp. 245-246 on meaning embedded in narrative. See also Woodman (1992) pp. 207-215 on the issue of meaning in text.

<sup>5</sup> 1.12.

<sup>6</sup> 7.36-7.52. For a comprehensive examination of *exempla* refer to Chaplin's introduction (2000) pp. 11-31.



persuasive role and an examination of the second invasion of Britain illustrates that a contextual element, the forces of the enemy, are used to create implicit messages about the campaign.<sup>7</sup> Most importantly, Caesar's battle narratives work in conjunction with, or directly address, the surrounding text in order to persuade the audience, and in the Venetii episode, battle supports the objective of explaining difficulties described in the overall campaign.<sup>8</sup> The battle against Ariovistus and the Germani in Book One is also determined by the preceding narrative, in this case by the description of a near mutiny at Vesontio, and the boasts of the Germanic leader Ariovistus.<sup>9</sup> The battle addresses the reputation of the Germani, supports Caesar's disregard for their alleged prowess, and demonstrates the superiority of the Romans. These battle passages all conform to a thematic pattern, or are used persuasively to influence the audience, illustrating the various means by which Caesar uses battle in pursuit of stated or implicit interpretations of his material.

### **Vengeance at the River Arar**

Caesar sometimes has a stated message that his battle description supports, as is evident in the defeat of the Tigurini at the river Arar. This account omits a detailed battle description but elaborates on the meaning as the enactment of vengeance against an old enemy, something that scholars have noted previously.<sup>10</sup> The effect of this interpretation is evident as the battle is extremely short and only minimal details of combat are required to achieve this objective. In comparison to the simplification of the actual combat section the extent to which the justification is elaborated indicates that the size of an encounter, the extent to which an enemy is defeated, and any complexities are not necessarily the determinants for the narrative, if Caesar is able to establish his interpretation in a shorter passage.<sup>11</sup> In this case, the major

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<sup>7</sup> 5.8-5.23.

<sup>8</sup> 3.7-3.16.

<sup>9</sup> 1.31-53.

<sup>10</sup> See Kraus (2009) p. 168; Melchior (2004) p. 28; Gerlinger (2008) pp. 274-276. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 176-177, and Ramage (2001) p. 149. Note also that the context of vengeance is not mentioned in the Helvetii battle at 1.24-1.28, even though there is an implication at 1.12.7 that vengeance is an aspect of both these battles as the Tigurini are first (*princeps*) to pay the penalty.

<sup>11</sup> The defeat of the Tigurini achieves its objective of establishing the idea of vengeance in one chapter, whereas the Sabis River narrative from 2.17-2.28 has multiple objectives, including stylistic and self-promotional objectives, and is over eleven chapters in length. See pp. 66-71, 192-204, 222-238 below for the various objectives of the Sabis River narrative.

objective is to show the historical and personal ramifications for Rome and Caesar, and the details of battle narrative are used to support that aim.

The brief description of the fight indicates that Caesar is only concerned with the basic details of combat.<sup>12</sup> The battle itself is a highly successful one according to the account, but there is little information on the victory or its short term implications. The enemy are attacked *impeditos et inopinantes*, which is a bare minimum of detail required to capture the state of the tribe, the sudden approach of the Romans and the location of the battle at a river which the enemy are trying to cross.<sup>13</sup> The entire canton is *impeditos*, illustrative of how the forces at the battle are identified as a single unified body in order to capture the basic nature of the confrontation.<sup>14</sup> Similarly the three Roman legions involved are not given dispositions or separate detail that might allow a more detailed analysis of how events unfolded.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless the military objective of eliminating enemy forces is addressed through the simple explanation that the Tigurini represent a quarter of the total number of Helvetians.<sup>16</sup> Importantly, a whole range of possible information could have been provided after the battle, such as the effect of removing a quarter of the entire Helvetian confederation, but Caesar does not discuss the effect of this loss on the Helvetii.<sup>17</sup> He provides the minimum detail necessary to understand the conditions and the result, demonstrating that such military concerns are not the primary purpose of the passage.

By contrast, what description exists is designed to convey a message that the Tigurini are the recipients of vengeance. The enemy are effectively helpless in the face of the Roman attack, either dying without any resistance or stealing away to the woods.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Mannetter (1995) pp. 104-105 regards this battle as foreshadowing the fate of the Helvetii in general. If the battle passage has an introductory role, this may also explain the brevity of the combat described. See also Martin Jr. (1965) p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> 1.12.3. Another major example of a short narrative is the battle against the Usipetes and Tencteri, which devotes only two chapters to the combat itself at 4.14-4.15.

<sup>14</sup> Tribal elements not crossing the river would probably still be *impeditos*, due to them simply being caught by surprise. However Caesar makes no differentiation between the individual elements, and it is therefore unclear if anyone was actually crossing the river.

<sup>15</sup> 1.12.2-1.12.3.

<sup>16</sup> 1.12.4-1.12.5.

<sup>17</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 168 notes how the “post-battle wrap up” is unusual here in its reversion to the past. The rest of the Helvetii make no reference to this loss, nor does Caesar mention it in the battle against them at 1.24-1.26. In particular, it does not affect their arrogance at 1.13.3-1.13.5 and they even appear to dismiss the loss at 1.13.5.

<sup>18</sup> Note the use of *abdiderunt* at 1.12.4. See also the Usipetes and Tencteri account discussed below at pp. 309-319.

The Tigurini are also held responsible as a group, in stark contrast to the recently mentioned Orgetorix, who plotted for control of the Helvetii at the start of Book One, and whose criminal activities were those of the individual.<sup>19</sup> Even though Caesar may have known of their leaders, the battle is interpreted as an act of vengeance against all of the people.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, the choice of content ensures that the message regarding retribution against the entire people is communicated.

The message regarding vengeance, alluded to in the battle passage, is openly described at the end and directly states the retributive theme. Caesar reveals that the thus far unnamed element is the Tigurini, who have a particular history that makes the course and result of the battle perfectly justified.<sup>21</sup> By structuring the battle so that the revelation concerning the Tigurini happens at the end, Caesar presents the battle more clearly as a fortuitous act of punishment.<sup>22</sup> As he states: *quae pars civitatis Helvetiae insignem calamitatem populo Romano intulerat, ea princeps poenas persolvit.*<sup>23</sup> He even invokes the possibility that this was divinely engineered.<sup>24</sup> The revelation at the end clearly indicates the battle is an act of punishment, and illustrates that Caesar wishes it interpreted as such.

Caesar's purpose is evident in the two major impressions that he creates at the end of the battle. He makes reference to history in order to explain the context in which the battle should be viewed, illustrating that the meaning, rather than the combat itself, is the primary concern of the passage.<sup>25</sup> He even mentions individual Romans killed previously, the consul Lucius Cassius and Lucius Piso, thereby ending the narrative with a list of personal and public outrages.<sup>26</sup> Their deaths, rather than any Roman casualties from the event, indicate that the narrative is designed to emphasise the

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<sup>19</sup> See 1.2-1.4 for Orgetorix.

<sup>20</sup> A similar approach is used in the account of the Aduatuci at 2.33, the Venetii at 3.16, the Usipetes and Tencteri at 4.13-4.15 and Avaricum 7.28. In these accounts the entire population is punished, and no mention of individuals is given.

<sup>21</sup> Matthews (2010) p. 79 notes that the Tigurini were present with the Cimbri and Teutones in the historical encounter. They did not fight and simply fled. See Florus, *Epitome Bell.* 1.38.18-19. Presumably this would not exempt them from punishment.

<sup>22</sup> See also the numbers of the Helvetii at 1.29, and the numbers of the Usipetes and Tencteri at 4.15.

<sup>23</sup> 1.12.6-1.12.7.

<sup>24</sup> 1.12.6.

<sup>25</sup> See Ramage (2002) p. 131. Ramage notes that the defeat of Cassius by Helvetians in 107 BCE is mentioned six times in Book One at 1.12.6, 1.13.4, 1.13.7, 1.14.1, 1.14.7, 1.30.2. This suggests that the defeat of the Tigurini may also be part of a broader pattern in Book One.

<sup>26</sup> 1.12.7.

vengeance element over any empirical assessment of the battle.<sup>27</sup> An elaborate combat narrative is not necessary is to convey this stated message. The account of the Tigurini is therefore a clear example of a battle narrative that is designed to persuade the audience; in this case that victory against them was an act of retribution against a historical enemy of Rome.

### **Anecdote, *Exemplum* and Battle Narrative**

The content of battle narrative can be used in a more elaborate manner than that apparent in the Tigurini account, and Caesar utilises rhetorical techniques, in particular *exempla*, and other combat anecdotes to support any objectives he has regarding particular episodes.<sup>28</sup> Wheeler notes that combat anecdotes in the *Bellum Gallicum* have been misused at times and is highly critical of Goldsworthy, who appears to take them literally, stating that the use of combat anecdotes ignores historians' "penchant for the dramatic effect of such *exempla*" and the possibility that the "exceptional" of such anecdotes may not be typical.<sup>29</sup> An appropriate view of combat anecdotes is espoused by Kraus, who notes, citing Cicero, that historians presented truth in artistically persuasive ways "availing themselves of the 'paint box' of rhetoric".<sup>30</sup> Cicero in particular notes that *exempla* are types of comparisons that strengthen or weaken a case by the authority/precedent or experience of a certain person or event, suggesting that these figures may appear for their persuasive

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<sup>27</sup> Seager (2003) pp. 19-20 notes that L. Cassius was killed by the Helvetii. Seager also notes there are ongoing references to previous injustices that appear in the earlier parts of Book One. This illustrates how Caesar places his actions in their historical context. In the case of the Tigurini, this is clearly evident in the battle narrative, however as discussed at pp. 170-177, a major objective in the Helvetian narrative at 1.24-1.26 is to introduce the enemy and there are no overt references to the historical context.

<sup>28</sup> 7.36-7.52. Riggsby (2006) pp. 142, 154, regards these figures as epigrams that cap instances of heroism. This however does not account for their relationship to Caesar's objectives for each battle. On *exempla* in rhetoric, see Chaplin p. 13. Cicero *Orat* 120 states that *exempla* gain credibility for the speaker and delight the audience. Powell (1998) pp. 122-123 regards these as included to sooth the bitterness of the defeat. See also Price (1975) pp. 97, 120 for further discussion. On anecdote see Wheeler, (1998) p. 645. See also D. Nolan, (article forthcoming) "Caesar's *Exempla* and the Role of Centurions in Battle". Goldhill (2009) pp. 105, 111-112 has a general discussion of anecdote from the second sophistic period, and notes the need for more study in this area.

<sup>29</sup> Wheeler (1998) p. 645.

<sup>30</sup> Kraus (2005) pp. 242-243. See Cicero *ad Att* 2.1.1-2.1.2 and the idea that history is a task for the orator, and Cicero *De Orat* 2.62 and Quintilian 10.1.31 'the closest thing to [epic] poetry'. See also Wiseman (1993) pp. 132-138. A similar analysis is presented by Paul with regard to sieges, who notes that while some aspects of siege motifs intersect with history, both have their associations in rhetoric and skills in oratory.

impact.<sup>31</sup> In this section, Caesar's *exempla* and other combat anecdotes are shown to be fundamentally persuasive, and in the battle of Gergovia he utilises them to implicitly explain the defeat as due to a loss of self-control among the soldiers.<sup>32</sup> These vignettes are not just stylistic embellishment to a primarily descriptive account, nor are they included to record the deeds of exemplary characters. Instead they are included to implicitly reinforce Caesar's interpretation of the battle.

Caesar makes ongoing use of *exempla* throughout the *Bellum Gallicum* to support various objectives. In the battle of the Sabis River, the character of Publius Sextius Baculus is utilised to prepare for the arrival of Caesar in the text, as he serves to represent the general state of the legions and the need for Caesar's intervention.<sup>33</sup> Baculus is singled out, from all the wounded men, to represent the damaged status of the legion at a critical point in the narrative.<sup>34</sup> Lucius Vorenus and Titus Pullo are also utilised in an account in Book Five, to support the critical objective of condemning Sabinus and Cotta through a contrast to the defeated commanders.<sup>35</sup> Other figures, such as an aquilifer in the British landing, a pair of Gallic cavalymen in Book Four, and Considius the frightened subordinate, are used similarly to address the Caesar's objectives for the text.<sup>36</sup> The frequency of their appearance in the battle narratives of the work is indicative of Caesar's use of *exempla* to add persuasive force to a passage.

Details are included so that these *exempla* have highly memorable roles. This is evident in the Octodurus narrative, where the contribution of Baculus and Gaius Volusenus is designed to draw attention to their plan for survival.<sup>37</sup> As Caesar states:

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<sup>31</sup> See Cicero *de Inv* 1.29.46, on *confirmatio* and 1.49 for his definition, as discussed in Price (1975) pp. 104-105.

<sup>32</sup> See Choitz (2011) pp. 137-138, 154-155. Note that this section is also an example of how Caesar justifies his campaign conduct, discussed generally in Chapter Five pp. 277ff. See Kraus (2010) pp. 50-59 who notes the presence of several aspects to the narrative, such as the Aeduan revolt. This thesis focuses on the particular objective of explaining defeat, and the use of *exempla* and other anecdotes to achieve that objective. See also Kraus (2009) p. 167 on *exempla*. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 231 on the apologetic nature of the passage.

<sup>33</sup> See pp. 233-235 below. Welch (1998) p. 90 notes that Baculus is used as a device "the faithful and brave centurion".

<sup>34</sup> See 2.25.1.

<sup>35</sup> See p. 338 below. See Brown (2004) p. 307. Brown's interpretation of the centurions' contest is that it is to show the expiation of the Sabinus episode. Rambaud (1966) p. 231 states that Vorenus and Pullo are an antithesis to Sabinus and Cotta, and Rasmussen (1963) pp. 27-29 regards the speech of Pullo as a specific reminder of Sabinus' words.

<sup>36</sup> See Considius discussed above at pp. 62-63, the unnamed Aquilifer discussed at pp. 258-260 below, and the cavalymen discussed at pp. 311-313 below.

<sup>37</sup> 3.5.2-3.5.3.

...resque esset iam ad extremum perducta casum, P. Sextius Baculus, primi pili centurio, quem Nervico proelio compluribus confectum vulneribus diximus, et item C. Volusenus, tribunus militum, vir et consilii magni et virtutis, ad Galbam adcurrunt atque unam esse spem salutis docent, si eruptione facta extremum auxilium experirentur.<sup>38</sup>

The phrase *resque esset iam extremum perducta casum* indicates that the context of this intervention by the men is at a crisis point.<sup>39</sup> Caesar does not just include the plan they propose, but describes the two men rushing to Galba, the use of *adcurrunt* designed to capture and track the physical activity, thereby encouraging visualisation by the audience.<sup>40</sup> The critical importance of their intervention is apparent as their plan is hyperbolically described as *unam...spem salutis*.<sup>41</sup> The incident, critical as it is to the historical victory, is given a highly dramatic character in the narrative, indicating that Caesar is not only recording the pertinent details of the men's proposition but drawing attention to this particular incident.

Moreover, this dramatisation is not merely to provide a vignette, as the men serve symbolic roles. Baculus appears symbolic of the plight of the legion, a representative role consistent with other narratives in which he appears, such as the Sabis River account.<sup>42</sup> The cross referencing is evident in the statement: *P. Sextius Baculus, primi pili centurio, quem Nervico proelio compluribus confectum vulneribus diximus*.<sup>43</sup> This ostensible reminder of the character's name also establishes a link to the crisis point of the previous battle.<sup>44</sup> The reminder of Baculus' wounds evokes an atmosphere of desperation at this point, and gives personification to the dangerous state of affairs.<sup>45</sup> The specific evocation of his previous wounds suggests that Caesar uses the figure to

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<sup>38</sup> 3.5.1-3.5.3.

<sup>39</sup> 3.5.1.

<sup>40</sup> 3.5.2. See Klaus (1974) p. 159.

<sup>41</sup> 3.5.2.

<sup>42</sup> See 2.25.1. Kraus (2010) p. 56. As Kraus states characters such as Baculus "focus action ... are granted rare direct speech, and generally serve as the stylised representatives of (Caesar's) legions". See also 6.38 for another appearance of Baculus.

<sup>43</sup> 3.5.2. This also makes him symbolic of resilience.

<sup>44</sup> See pp. 233-235 below.

<sup>45</sup> See also 6.38 where Baculus intervenes personally in combat. Baculus is representative of the near defeat of the legion in that passage. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 227.

similar effect, to evoke the previous crisis in the currently problematic status of the legion.

While *Baculus* is representative of the legion, the description of Volusenus represents the plan that they suggest.<sup>46</sup> Volusenus is described as: *tribunus militum, vir et consilii magni et virtutis*.<sup>47</sup> By describing him as *consilii magni*, Caesar links the plan with the man's personal characteristics, making Volusenus a representative figure. *Virtus* is also mentioned as an element of the sally, indicating that his characteristics foreshadow the implementation of the plan.<sup>48</sup> In this instance, just as with *Baculus*, the presentation of Volusenus indicates that an individual supports Caesar's understanding of the battle.

The *exempla* in the Gergovia passage follow this pattern of use throughout the text, and their use is contextualised by an outright assessment of the battle by Caesar.<sup>49</sup> He states that the historical battle occurred in spite of his assessment that an attack on the city of Gergovia was not a sensible option.<sup>50</sup> This meaning is clear in his summation, where he describes the loss of control among the soldiers, something he communicates through a speech:

Postero die Caesar contione advocata temeritatem militum cupiditatemque reprehendit, quod sibi ipsi iudicavissent, quo procedendum aut quid agendum videretur, neque signo recipiendi dato constitissent neque a tribunis militum legatisque retineri potuissent...quantopere eorum animi magnitudinem admiraretur, quos non castrorum munitiones, non altitudo montis, non murus

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<sup>46</sup> See p. 101 above.

<sup>47</sup> 3.5.2.

<sup>48</sup> 3.5.3.

<sup>49</sup> Kraus (2010) p. 57 fn. 55 cites Cato *Orig HRR* as support for the idea that Marcus Petronius serves as an exemplar of "sacrificial glory". While this is correct, there is a more direct objective in the use of the figure.

<sup>50</sup> 7.43.5-7.43.6. Caesar's plans at Gergovia are stated, that he would withdraw from Gergovia without it looking like flight. See also 7.45.7-7.45.10, and 7.52, where he admonishes the troops for advancing too far. See Mannetter (1995) pp. 114-115. Kagan (2006) at pp. 163-175 accepts this explanation by Caesar as correct for the historical event. However Kagan relies heavily on the battle narrative itself to build her case, information that is highly problematic in the absence of other evidence.

oppidi tardare potuisset, tantopere licentiam arrogantiamque reprehendere quod plus se quam imperatorem de victoria atque exitu rerum sentire existimarent...<sup>51</sup>

As is clarified in this statement, the men lost control and advance too far in spite of his desires and assessment of the situation.<sup>52</sup> This explanation forms the context for the narrative, where blame is attached to the soldiers.

Caesar most notably utilises combat *exempla* to illustrate his assessment, and describes the overenthusiastic desire for rewards in Lucius Fabius, a centurion of the Eighth Legion, whose motives are described as follows:

L. Fabius centurio legionis VIII, quem inter suos eo die dixisse constabat excitari se Avaricensibus praemiis neque commissurum, ut prius quisquam murum ascenderet, tres suos nactus manipulares atque ab his sublevatus murum ascendit, eos ipse rursus singulos exceptans in murum extulit.<sup>53</sup>

The reference to Avaricum and booty is a description of individual motivation, but is one that can also be applied to the men in general.<sup>54</sup> The description of Lucius lifting up the men is a minor but important detail, as it associates his own motivation with the other soldiers, thereby showing the behaviour as completely motivated and implemented by the lower ranks. Lucius' motives reflect what Caesar states is the problem, and the character's actions are illustrative of how the individual is used to draw attention to the loss of control among the men.

Furthermore, Caesar immediately uses another *exemplum* to support his interpretation, demonstrating the extent to which he utilises these individual stories to reinforce the objective of the passage. After Lucius dies, the centurion Marcus Petronius repents for his part in the acts of culpability.<sup>55</sup> Marcus is described as follows:

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<sup>51</sup> 7.52.1-7.52.4.

<sup>52</sup> Melchior (2004) p.31 notes the lesson in the text, but states it is that Roman soldiers die when they disobey or are overzealous. Note that this protects Caesar from implications of *cupiditas*.

<sup>53</sup> 7.47.7.

<sup>54</sup> On the supporting role of the two *exempla* see Choitz (2011) p. 142.

<sup>55</sup> Kraus (2010) p. 57 fn. 55. Kraus regards the role of Marcus Petronius as a sacrificial one. See also Hall (1998) pp. 16-17 on syntax.



... L. Fabius centurio quique una murum ascenderant, circumventi atque interfecti de muro praecipitabantur. M. Petronius, eiusdem legionis centurio, cum portas excidere conatus esset, a multitudine oppressus ac sibi desperans multis iam vulneribus acceptis, manipularibus suis, qui illum erant secuti “quoniam” inquit “me una vobiscum servare non possum, vestrae quidem certe vitae prospiciam, quos cupiditate gloriae adductus in periculum deduxi. vos data facultate vobis consulite.” simul in medios hostes inrupit duobusque interfectis reliquos a porta paulum submovit. Conantibus auxiliari suis “frustra” inquit “meae vitae subvenire conamini, quem iam sanguis viresque deficiunt. proinde abite, dum est facultas, vosque ad legionem recipite.” ita pugnans post paulo concidit ac suis saluti fuit.<sup>56</sup>

Caesar’s use of *cupiditate* here is an exact reference to the general soldiery who all behave this way.<sup>57</sup> Marcus not only admits his error in a direct speech, but redeems himself through combat, sacrificing himself to achieve safety for the men and to make up for his mistake.<sup>58</sup> Along with Lucius Fabius, his presence is designed to support the overall contention that the men are at fault, and the doubling is particularly indicative of the extent to which Caesar uses anecdotal argumentation.<sup>59</sup> The individuals and their behaviour appear in order to support the message regarding the battle.

Caesar also uses combat anecdotes to illustrate his overall assessment of affairs. In particular he utilises the details of the Nitobrigian king, who is forced to flee the advancing Romans:<sup>60</sup>

...ac tanta fuit in capiendis castris celeritas, ut Teutomatus, rex Nitiobrogum, subito in tabernaculo oppressus, ut meridie conquieverat, superiore corporis parte nuda vulnerato equo vix se ex manibus praedantium militum eriperet.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> 7.50.3-7.50.6.

<sup>57</sup> 7.52.1.

<sup>58</sup> Gerlinger (2008) pp. 228-231.

<sup>59</sup> Kraus also notes the pairing of the two centurions. See Kraus (2010) p. 55 on the literary aspect of doubling. See also Kraus p (2010) p. 57. Kraus addresses the question of why Marcus is given the speech. Note that by giving Marcus a speech, an opportunity is given to verbalise Caesar’s overall assessment of culpability among the men.

<sup>60</sup> On anecdote and *evidentia* see Wiseman (1993) pp. 140, 146.

<sup>61</sup> 7.46.5.

While the incident is notable for the rank of the enemy, the details support Caesar's assessment that the men lose control and advance faster than could be expected. As he indicates, even the enemy are caught unawares by the speed of the advance. The reference to a desire for booty, evident in the use of *praedantium*, further establishes culpability as arising from the men's motivation.<sup>62</sup> The details of the vignette reinforce the overall interpretation and assist in the objective of exonerating Caesar from responsibility.

However this is not the only anecdote used to describe the loss of control, as indicated by the details of the women of Gergovia:

Matres familiae de muro vestem argentumque iactabant et pectore nudo prominentes passis manibus obtestabantur Romanos, ut sibi parcerent neu, sicut Avarici fecissent, ne a mulieribus quidem atque infantibus abstinerent; nonnullae de muro per manus demissae sese militibus tradebant.<sup>63</sup>

It is clear through the anecdote that the men are in a position where they are out of control, or struggling to stay in order. The temptations offered, and the description of the men even in possession of the women, is anecdotal, but is an example of the *cupiditas* that is attributed to the soldiers overall.<sup>64</sup> Therefore, while Kagan states that Caesar is blaming Fabius as an individual, this ignores the more representative role that he serves, as the loss of control is clearly occurring more widely, with a frontage of three legions and numerous centurions in attendance.<sup>65</sup> The details show the temptations that drive the men on to the walls against orders, illustrating the integration of combat vignettes into the interpretation of the battle.

Throughout the account of Gergovia, Caesar integrates anecdotal details of combat into a comprehensive picture that supports his interpretation of the battle, and assigns clear culpability for the affair. The attention to detail, while it appears superficially of

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<sup>62</sup> 7.46.5. Kagan (2006) p. 167 does not address the representative role of the Nitobrigian king, illustrating how such anecdotes can be overlooked. Kagan takes the incident with the King literally and suggests it may even be directly responsible for the loss of control.

<sup>63</sup> 7.47.5-7.47.7.

<sup>64</sup> 7.48.3-7.48.4. Note also that when the battle turns in favour of the enemy, the women appear again to illustrate the change in circumstances. Kraus (2010) p. 55 notes this use of the women.

<sup>65</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 167.

interest in describing events, appears carefully designed to support the stated interpretation. The use of anecdotes is indicative of how thoroughly Caesar integrates combat details as stylistic devices into the literary schema of his battle narratives, and that battle is designed to persuade the audience through the content selected.

### **Persuasive use of Numbers and the Britanni**

In a similar manner to the use of *exempla*, Caesar utilises contextual details such as numbers to support or establish impressions for his audience. In Chapter One it was illustrated that Caesar does not simply use numbers to clarify the details of a conflict, and that his information is clearly not transmitted for elucidation of numeric relationships. Instead the use of numbers for self-promotion and persuasive force is apparent throughout the work, and the second invasion of Britain is one account that illustrates that numbers and other contextual information about forces exist to support Caesar's interpretation of his activity, rather than to clarify the details of the confrontation. As Riggsby notes of the work as a whole, it is "merely descriptive on its surface", a statement that is particularly relevant to the use of numbers.<sup>66</sup> Numeric information can be seen to support objectives not related to clarification of battle, but to an interpretation of the campaign or the extent of Caesar's victory.

Caesar shares with other sources the citation of extraordinarily large numbers in several battles, a use that may be for the simple purpose of establishing the greatness of his victory. The problem of numbers in general has been noted by Richter, in particular that the extremely large numbers cited are a highly problematic feature of ancient historiography.<sup>67</sup> Caesar is no exception and cites numbers that are very large, as is apparent in the Belgae confrontation discussed in Chapter One and in the Alesia account.<sup>68</sup> As Daly notes of Polybius, this use of numbers may be for the purpose of drama, and Caesar certainly appears to cite numbers when it emphasises the scope of the encounter.<sup>69</sup> This is immediately apparent in the Belgae encounter, where the

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<sup>66</sup> Riggsby (2006) p. 208.

<sup>67</sup> Richter (1977) pp. 156-158. See also Herodotus 7.60, Arrian *Anab* 3.8.2-3.8.6 for numbers cited in the millions.

<sup>68</sup> See 2.4 for the Belgae, and Alesia 7.75.

<sup>69</sup> Daly (2002) p. 23.

topos of the enemy horde adds tension and a sense of danger to the passage.<sup>70</sup> However the impression of vast odds also adds to the greatness of Caesar's achievement in defeating them, and may not simply be a record of enemy encountered.

The appearance of numeric information to give force to a victory is particularly apparent throughout the *Bellum Gallicum* when such odds appear at the end of a passage. This is evident in the defeat of the Helvetii, where the census numbers revealed at the end have a revelatory effect in drawing attention to the numbers of enemy defeated.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, the numbers of the Usipetes and Tencteri are related at the end of their battle narrative, even though it is not the numbers of combatants that is given.<sup>72</sup> Unlike their appearance in the works of historians like Polybius or Livy, the details do not always appear to be a comparison of forces as they only appear at the end of the account.<sup>73</sup> These details are not provided at the start of the campaign narrative where they might assist in understanding the forces involved in combat, but exist in order to support the extent of his achievements.

Where Caesar does provide numbers prior to a battle, the details nevertheless appear aimed at self-promotion. The battle against the Belgae, examined in Chapter One for its creation of the topos of the multitude, is an example of Caesar structuring his account to emphasise the odds against him.<sup>74</sup> As was demonstrated in Chapter One, this topos is highly reductive and is not designed to provide elucidation about the battle, as it simplifies the actions of a massive force, not accounting for the actions of individual tribes or other elements.<sup>75</sup> Instead, the topos functions to create a single entity against which Caesar and his forces triumph, even though Caesar may only have faced some of the tribal elements as they retreated, due to the sheer size of the force described.<sup>76</sup> The simplification of the numeric odds has a persuasive role as it draws attention to the commander's ability to triumph in the face of overwhelming odds.

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<sup>70</sup> See above pp. 71-88.

<sup>71</sup> 1.29.

<sup>72</sup> 4.15.

<sup>73</sup> See above p. 48 fn. 55.

<sup>74</sup> See pp. 71-88 above on the topos of the Gallic multitude.

<sup>75</sup> See pp. 79-88 above.

<sup>76</sup> See pp. 86-87 above.

In the second British invasion, Caesar uses the numeric information to create more particular impressions than the odds faced as the numbers cited support specific messages about the course of the campaign. When he mentions during the campaign that the enemy leader Cassivellaunus dismisses all his troops except for 4,000 chariots, there is no initial number to compare it with.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, the figure is clearly indicative of a relative threat, and that these forces and Cassivellaunus are still dangerous, as they are much greater than the 1,700 cavalry Caesar has with him at the time.<sup>78</sup> The number is clearly designed to explain the threat that Cassivellaunus poses, and to explain why the enemy are able, through an irregular form of warfare, to prevent the Romans from moving freely.<sup>79</sup> The numbers are given as part of an analysis of the strategic and tactical landscape, rather than to explain the total numbers in combat.

The choice of which enemy forces to enumerate in this campaign illustrates that information is chosen to support general observations, in this case, the idea that the enemy chariots represent the main threat to the campaign.<sup>80</sup> Caesar never mentions the infantry of the enemy, even though these were clearly present in the first campaign and most likely used by the Britons in the second.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless they do not feature in the narrative, which focuses on the role of chariots and cavalry and the challenges these posed for his forces.<sup>82</sup> He only selects the units that best illustrate the points he is making about the conduct of the affair, in this case how the chariots and cavalry of the enemy are the main threat, and as such he is only including military data pertinent to those arguments.

Furthermore, Caesar uses contextual details to summarise the results of campaign. He mentions no tribal names in the early part of the episode, only stating a general

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<sup>77</sup> 5.19.1. This is most evident at 5.8.6 where no estimate of forces is given.

<sup>78</sup> 5.19.1. Caesar's numbers are not given but can be estimated from 5.8, less those left at camp mentioned at 5.9.

<sup>79</sup> See 5.19.2-5.19.3. See Bradley (2009) p. 1088 on the use of the chariot.

<sup>80</sup> See below pp. 245-260, 283-291, 319-335 for a full explanation of Caesar's objectives in the first and second invasions.

<sup>81</sup> The presence of enemy infantry in the first invasion is evident at 4.24 as the enemy cavalry and chariots are sent ahead, presumably of the main force of infantry. In the second invasion, Caesar is able to pursue the enemy with both his own infantry and cavalry at 5.10.1 after defeating them, suggesting that their infantry slowed them down.

<sup>82</sup> See 4.33 and 5.16 for Caesar's analysis, which focuses on the cavalry and chariots.

division according to maritime status.<sup>83</sup> However in the last four chapters of the account he not only mentions a list of the tribes who capitulate, but also the kings defeated.<sup>84</sup> He even mentions the captured tribal leader, Lugotorix who has made no appearance in the narrative so far.<sup>85</sup> This belated mention of names and tribes at the very end of the episode demonstrates that the information is not provided to clarify the conflict prior to battle. While an audience can retrospectively apply such information to the whole account, the details provided are not directed at early clarification of such circumstances. The list of tribes and kings primarily exist in order to summarise the results of the campaign. They indicate that Caesar's use of numeric data and lists are a support of his general contentions about the campaign and his victory, more than a clarification of the protagonists for his audience. This particular campaign illustrates the highly specific manner in which Caesar utilises numeric and contextual information to influence the audience understanding of the events described.

### **Campaign and the Venetii Battle**

There is a close relationship between battle narrative and the surrounding text, and content is sometimes designed to support a concern regarding the larger episode rather than the battle itself. This occurs in the description of the naval battle against the Venetii, which provides an example of how battle narrative can be narrated in order to present a unified explanation for the campaign.<sup>86</sup> The concept that defines this episode is the difficulties Caesar faced in prosecuting war against the Venetii, and this impression determines the content and structure of the battle narrative.<sup>87</sup> While the battle brings the campaign to a close, the choice of content is not driven by a need to

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<sup>83</sup> 5.11.8. Note the tribe of Cassivellaunus is not mentioned, at this point, and in the digression on the island of Britain Caesar refers to people simply using variations of *cultus*, as at 5.12.1, or their location i.e. *interiores* at 5.14.2. This avoidance of tribes suggests a deliberate strategy of holding over the tribal names for the very end. See also Richter (1977) pp. 93-95.

<sup>84</sup> 5.21.1-5.21.2, 5.22. See Manner (1995) pp. 138-175 cf. p. 141, on catalogues, and the apparently "superfluous" catalogue here.

<sup>85</sup> 5.22.2-5.22.3.

<sup>86</sup> 3.7-3.16. See also the fighting in Britain in the first invasion, where combat supports the interpretation of the campaign. This is discussed at pp. 283-291 below.

<sup>87</sup> See Schadee (2008) p. 166 on the construction of this part of Gaul.

reconstruct the circumstances of battle itself.<sup>88</sup> In particular the presentation of combat, which describes the use of *falces* as a counter to the enemy ships, is an example of how the issue of Venetii naval superiority is addressed, at the expense of a full understanding of how the combat was fought.<sup>89</sup> Reconstruction is subordinated to the broader purpose of persuading the audience to accept the presentation of the overall campaign.

In order to understand the battle narrative, it is important to recognise Caesar's objective throughout the campaign narrative, which is to stress the difficulties of fighting the Venetii. As Ramage notes, the presentation of the campaign could be classified as *labor*, due to the frustration involved in its resolution.<sup>90</sup> The particular issues faced in the campaign are something Caesar clarifies in the description of the Venetii, and the reasons for their position among their peers. As he states:

Huius est civitatis longe amplissima auctoritas omnis orae maritimae regionum earum, quod et naves habent Veneti plurimas, quibus in Britanniam navigare consuerunt, et scientia atque usu rerum nauticarum ceteros antecedunt et in magno impetu maris atque aperto Oceano paucis portibus interiectis, quos tenent ipsi, omnes fere, qui eo mari uti consuerunt, habent vectigales.<sup>91</sup>

This passage makes mention of topographic features such as the openness of the sea and lack of ports, rather than just state that the Venetii control the region, thereby introducing the unique terrain and foreshadowing the problems it poses.<sup>92</sup> The passage is also specific about the reasons for Venetii dominance, and states aspects of their *auctoritas* that cause Caesar the most difficulty in resolving the campaign. The

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<sup>88</sup> See Conley (1983) p. 181. Conley notes the importance of the campaign and that the battle is a "strategic turn" within a "tactical engagement". Levick (1998) pp. 65ff is primarily concerned with the historical context of the account and to support Stevens' conclusions about the campaign. Erickson (2002) p. 617 provides a metaphorical reading of the battle narrative based on *virtus* as a theme.

<sup>89</sup> 3.14.5-3.14.7. In regards to technology see generally Rey (2010) p. 33 who states that the ancient world had little concept of progress and did not use modern interpretations of causality. In opposition, see Lendon (2005) p. 10 who supports the idea of ancient concepts of technological progress. See also Hanson (1999) p. 395 who states that ancients were aware of how important superior equipment was on the battlefield and its effect on victory. He says Caesar "often" cites such.

<sup>90</sup> On the campaign as *labor*, see Ramage (2003) pp. 341-342.

<sup>91</sup> 3.8.1. It is interesting to note how quickly the Venetii are built into a major threat in this passage, through the risk of them serving as an exemplar of rebellion to other Gallic groups.

<sup>92</sup> See Manner (1995) pp. 97-118 on foreshadowing.

mention of Britain is important as it establishes their familiarity with the open ocean and general facility at sea. The reference also alludes to the alien nature of the region for a Roman fleet, which does not normally function outside the Mediterranean. While ostensibly introducing the Venetii and the reasons for their pre-eminence, Caesar also establishes the conditions that govern his presentation of the whole passage.

The importance of the campaign conditions is evident as Caesar even addresses them in his portrayal of culpability. He highlights the criminality of the Venetii, stating of their preparations that: *quantum in se facinus admisissent intellegebant*.<sup>93</sup> Similarly he phrases the need for campaigning in terms of the requirement that their crime be punished.<sup>94</sup> The association of these characteristics with challenges such as terrain is most evident in the enemy rationale for war.<sup>95</sup> As Caesar states:

...hoc maiore spe quod multum natura loci confidebant. pedestria esse itinera concisa aestuariis, navigationem impeditam propter inscientiam locorum paucitatemque portuum sciebant; neque nostros exercitus propter frumenti inopiam diutius apud se morari posse confidebant; ac iam ut omnia contra opinionem acciderent, tamen se plurimum navibus posse, Romanos neque ullam facultatem habere navium neque eorum locorum, ubi bellum gesturi essent, vada portus insulas novisse; ac longe aliam esse navigationem in concluso mari atque in vastissimo atque apertissimo Oceano perspiciebant.<sup>96</sup>

The nature of the terrain is presented within the context of enemy confidence, so that the physical location and the arrogance of the enemy are closely associated.<sup>97</sup> Similarly the problems of fighting on the ocean are presented with attention to ethnicity, as the Venetii compare the sea to the native waters of the Romans. The

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<sup>93</sup> 3.9.3.

<sup>94</sup> 3.10.2. Erickson (2002) p. 610 notes that the Venetii are presented as schemers at 3.8.3 and this idea is returned to at 3.19.6. While at 3.19.6 Caesar does not specifically mention the Venetii, he does emphasise the Gallic propensity towards sudden war. See also 3.11 for Caesar's pressing need to prosecute the campaign and the guilt of the enemy regarding legates. See also Rambaud (1966) p. 123.

<sup>95</sup> See the arrogance of Ariovistus for an example 1.44-1.46. On terrain see the Aduatuci, discussed below at pp. 184-192.

<sup>96</sup> 3.9.3-3.9.8.

<sup>97</sup> See 3.8.5. The Venetii reply is short, blunt and reflects their arrogance.



difficulties are given a partisan character, and the sheer preposterousness of a Mediterranean power attempting warfare at sea in the Atlantic emphasised through the use of superlatives *vastissimo* and *apertissimo*.<sup>98</sup> In each case, the conditions are presented and associated with the arrogance and confidence of the Venetii, demonstrating the extent to which the campaign circumstances have been integrated even into the attitude of the enemy.

These circumstances are repeated at several points throughout the passage, indicating the concern to remind the audience of the difficulty of the campaign. After stating the conditions, first in the introduction and then through the attitude of the Venetii, Caesar is careful to confirm the veracity of their statements, stating: *erant hae difficultates belli gerendi, quas supra ostendimus, sed multa tamen Caesarem ad id bellum incitabant*.<sup>99</sup> The word *difficultas* is used both here and later, so that the initial assessment is reinforced through reiteration.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore reinforcement is included in other issues, such as the description of Venetii naval resources in a passage on the evacuation of townsfolk.<sup>101</sup> These qualifications and reiteration demonstrate the importance of clearly defining the challenges as part of the scope of the overall account.

Even information regarding the alliances of the enemy are included to stress the obstacles faced in prosecuting the war. Sources as early as Strabo have noted that Caesar's actual campaign might have come about due to his plans for an invasion of Britain, which in turn led the Venetii to oppose him.<sup>102</sup> While Caesar makes brief mention of Britain, he does so within the context of the naval abilities of the Venetii, who are reinforced by British contingents.<sup>103</sup> The inclusion of British forces may help justify Caesar's later invasion of the island, but it is important to note that it appears in this passage within the governing paradigm of Venetii strength.

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<sup>98</sup> 3.9.7. See Rice Holmes (1911) p. 108.

<sup>99</sup> 3.10.1-3.10.2. See also 3.12.1-3.12.5 for a specific description of the problems of assault.

<sup>100</sup> See 3.10.1, 3.12.5 for Caesar repeating the difficulties. See 3.13.1 for the shoals. See also 3.12.5 for weather and terrain conditions.

<sup>101</sup> 3.12.3-3.12.5.

<sup>102</sup> Strabo *Geog* 4.4.1. See Levick (1998) pp. 65, 67. For the idea that the Venetii campaign was in preparation for Britain, see Stevens (1952) pp. 8-13.

<sup>103</sup> See 3.9.10 for the use of British *auxilia* and see 3.8.1 for sailing to Britain.

The difficulties form the foundation of the account, so that they appear at the expense of actual information regarding the progress of the campaign.<sup>104</sup> After relating the disposition of his legates Caesar describes his own advance when he states: *ipse eo pedestribus copiis contendit*.<sup>105</sup> However after this the chronological nature of the narrative is largely abandoned to describe in a more general fashion the defences that topography afford the enemy. As he states of the terrain:

Erant eiusmodi fere situs oppidorum, ut posita in extremis lingulis promunturiisque neque pedibus aditum haberent, cum ex alto se aestus incitavisset, quod bis accidit semper horarum duodenarum spatio, neque navibus, quod rursus minuenta aestu naves in vadis adfluctarentur. ita utraque re oppidorum oppugnatio impediabatur. ac si quando magnitudine operis forte superati extruso mari aggere ac molibus atque his oppidi moenibus adaequatis suis fortunis desperare coeperant, magno numero navium adpulso, cuius rei summam facultatem habebant, sua deportabant omnia seque in proxima oppida recipiebant; ibi se rursus isdem loci opportunitatibus defendebant.<sup>106</sup>

This passage highlights how Caesar blends activity into the purpose of the passage, which is to describe the problems faced. The passage begins by describing the nature of the terrain, but also includes aspects of progress such as the siege of towns and the flight of the enemy.<sup>107</sup> Progress is described primarily in relation to the problematic terrain and the enemy's naval superiority.

Other information provided is only rudimentary in nature, and appears in the account as secondary to the description of the problems. This is evident in the account just prior to the battle. As Caesar states:

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<sup>104</sup> Levick (1998) p. 64 notes how unclear the passage is. On structuring an account around the difficulties, see also the landing in Britain discussed below at pp. 254-260, and fighting in the following campaign at pp. 283-291. On the general difficulties in their historical context see Stevens (1952).

<sup>105</sup> 3.11.5.

<sup>106</sup> 3.12.1.

<sup>107</sup> See also 3.13.7-3.13.8. Caesar uses a similar method within the technical description of the ships of the Venetii, substituting a stylised form of combat for actual encounters so that battle is given a generic character.

Compluribus expugnatis oppidis Caesar ubi intellexit frustra tantum laborem sumi neque hostium fugam captis oppidis reprimi neque iis noceri posse, statuit exspectandam classem.<sup>108</sup>

The details are basic, not even giving the number of towns taken, as the purpose is not to emphasise the successes.<sup>109</sup> No location names, such as ports, are given anywhere in the account, and even the town of the Venetii is not named and may only be assumed once the battle is finally resolved.<sup>110</sup> Spatial relationships, such as the location of fleet and army in relation to each other, are also not provided, so that while Caesar states that he had to await his fleet, the location of neither force is specified.<sup>111</sup> Even here he cannot avoid a value judgement, capturing his frustration with the words *frustra tantum laborem*. The campaign progress, in particular the successes, are only given a cursory description and are incidental to the main thrust of the passage, which centres on the obstacles to victory and the attempts to overcome them.

There are also important omissions in the movement of resources that further demonstrate that only obstacles receive attention. The construction of ships that Caesar orders are not described, and must be assumed from the appearance of the fleet in the narrative.<sup>112</sup> The account omits all reference to the process once the order is given, and Dio's attempt to address this gap is indicative of the missing dimension in Caesar's version, where Dio at least attempts to explain the full context by stating that Caesar made ships much earlier before attacking the separate towns.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, the movement of Brutus and the fleet to the lands of the Venetii is not recorded.<sup>114</sup> How and when these resources, critical to ultimate success, arrive is not described. They are simply assumed, indicating that when Caesar does not meet an obstacle to victory

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<sup>108</sup> 3.14.1-3.14.2.

<sup>109</sup> See 3.1.4 and refer to pp. 90-91 on the battle of Octodurus. Caesar's use of *complures* to capture a whole range of assaults is similar to the manner he summarised the campaigning of Galba, in the introduction to the battle of Octodurus at 3.1.4. See also Avaricum discussed at pp. 294-295 below.

<sup>110</sup> See 3.12.5 for an example. No actual towns or port names are given. See 3.8.1, 3.9.4, and 3.12.1, 3.14.1, for generic town descriptions. See also 3.16.1-3.16.4 for the assumption that this is the town of the Venetii.

<sup>111</sup> See 3.16.1-3.16.4 regarding Caesar and the fleet. Note the centrality of Caesar is discussed below at pp. 215-220.

<sup>112</sup> 3.9.1.

<sup>113</sup> See Dio 39.40.

<sup>114</sup> 3.11.4-3.11.5.

he does not provide elaboration.<sup>115</sup> The omissions illustrate that he does not account for physical progress or include relevant details when they do not support the governing message.

Where Caesar provides campaign data, he nevertheless does so in relation to the general difficulties faced. This is shown in the presentation of fleet inactivity, which he states as follows:

Haec eo facilius magnam partem aestatis faciebant, quod nostrae naves tempestatibus detinebantur summaque erat vasto atque aperto mari, magnis aestibus, raris ac prope nullis portibus difficultas navigandi.<sup>116</sup>

The information that the fleet is held in port is included in order to explain the ease with which the enemy act. Details are rudimentary, as the main purpose of the statement is to record the reasons success is held up, and to again describe the problematic nature of terrain and weather conditions. The passage demonstrates that descriptive details are only provided to reinforce or explain the impediments to success.

Caesar even presents his successes to generate this effect, by giving emphasis to the inconclusive nature of the victories described.<sup>117</sup> The Romans perform successful actions throughout the campaign, storming several towns, and forcing the occupants to flee.<sup>118</sup> Therefore, the information conveys that Caesar makes progress as the campaign continues, however he includes the ability of the Venetii to resist later stating: *...sua deportabant omnia seque in proxima oppida recipiebant; ibi se rursus isdem loci opportunitatibus defendebant.*<sup>119</sup> The use of *proxima* and *rursus isdem* emphasise the ongoing nature of the problem, as the enemy leave one defeated town only to resist in another nearby location. The ongoing nature of the difficulties is also illustrated as prior to the final battle the speed of the Roman ships is presented as only a mitigating factor against Venetii superiority, in spite of the actual taking of these

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<sup>115</sup> See also pp. 254-260 below on the invasion of Britain, and the presentations of obstacles in that account.

<sup>116</sup> 3.12.5.

<sup>117</sup> As noted at pp. 130-131 above.

<sup>118</sup> 3.12.1-3.12.5, 3.14.1-3.14.2.

<sup>119</sup> 3.12.1-3.12.5.

towns.<sup>120</sup> Caesar could have shown these other victories in a more positive manner, as a victory against the odds, however the content is designed to show early victories as inconclusive, and pre-eminence is given to the idea that the whole affair is a difficult one to wage.

The background to the campaign is not the only area that is determined by the concern with general conditions, and technical data is specifically included to support this interpretation.<sup>121</sup> The description of the enemy ships, immediately following an explanation of how the weather holds the Roman ships in port, shows that the technical description is actually addressed to the inability of the Romans to prosecute the campaign.<sup>122</sup> It is clear in the description of the ships that Caesar is specifically addressing these conditions, and the technical data is just a particularly detailed part of an address to the challenges. As he states:

Namque ipsorum naves ad hunc modum factae armataeque erant: carinae aliquanto planiores quam nostrarum navium, quo facilius vada ac decessum aestus excipere possent; prorae admodum erectae atque item puppes, ad magnitudinem fluctuum tempestatumque adcommodatae; naves totae factae ex robore ad quamvis vim et contumeliam perferendam; transtra ex pedalibus in altitudinem trabibus confixa clavis ferreis digiti pollicis crassitudine; ancorae pro funibus ferreis catenis revinctae; pelles pro velis alutaeque tenuiter confectae, sive propter lini inopiam atque eius usus inscientiam, sive quod est magis veri simile, quod tantas tempestates Oceani tantosque impetus ventorum sustineri ac tanta onera navium regi velis non satis commode posse arbitrabantur.<sup>123</sup>

This part of the description re-establishes the problems of the campaign within the technical details, demonstrating that Caesar is reiterating enemy superiority and not simply describing their naval skill. All the features at this stage, the high prows and poops, the strength of the ships, their anchors and sails, and even size of the nails

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<sup>120</sup> *ut una celeritate et pulsu remorum praestaret* 3.13.7. See Stevens (1952) p. 10 who examines the types of ships that might have been used as part of the invasion of Britain. The Romans actually have the advantage of speed, but Caesar presents this as though it is not much assistance.

<sup>121</sup> Dodington (1980) p. 34 views the representation of enemy skill as applicable to self-promotion in Caesar's conquest of these peoples.

<sup>122</sup> 3.12.5.

<sup>123</sup> 3.13.1-3.13.7.

appear in response to the implied question of why the Venetii are functioning at sea while the Romans are caught in port.<sup>124</sup> To make it particularly clear, Caesar initially describes the enemy ships in comparison to the Roman construction, thereby indicating the relative superiority that they enjoy under the circumstances. All the details are supporting evidence to illustrate the initial paradigm of the difficulties under which the Romans labour.

Even the fighting strength of the ships is designed to address the campaign rather than any specifics of battle. Caesar provides the following description of general combat between Romans and Venetii:

Cum his navibus nostrae classi eiusmodi congressus erat, ut una celeritate et pulsu remorum praestaret, reliqua pro loci natura, pro vi tempestatum illis essent aptiora et adcommodatiora. neque enim his nostrae rostro nocere poterant, tanta in iis erat firmitudo, neque propter altitudinem facile telum adigebatur, et eadem de causa minus commode copulis continebantur.<sup>125</sup>

This passage addresses the campaign, as it describes the facility of the ships in terms of the weather and the geography of the region. While specific details such as the use of the ram, missile weapons and grappling hooks are all describing generic combat, they actually answer any implied questions as to why the Romans are unable to prevent the Venetii from escaping by sea. They still fall within the context of an explanation of general enemy superiority over the course of the war.

Caesar's approach to his own knowledge regarding the campaign supports this impression, as he adopts the perspective that best suits a negative portrayal of events. The Venetii must appear strong and their confidence is related to the terrain, so Caesar displays relative omniscience with regard to their early plans. By contrast, he displays a lack of knowledge regarding Venetii sail construction, a technical matter that would have been known from the interrogation of any Venetii involved in shipbuilding.<sup>126</sup> The lack of knowledge regarding Venetii sail making presents Caesar

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<sup>124</sup> Dodington (1980) p. 43.

<sup>125</sup> 3.13.7-3.13.8.

<sup>126</sup> 3.13.6-3.13.7.

as vulnerable, lacking knowledge precisely when describing an aspect of enemy naval strength. While this display of retrospective knowledge appears somewhat selective, it nevertheless fits the account as it reinforces the image of vulnerability. The selective approach to Caesar's recollection appears to support the overall contention that this was a particularly difficult campaign to resolve conclusively.

### Campaign Objectives in the Battle

The battle supports Caesar's presentation of the difficulties, as the final confrontation specifically addresses and resolves the features ascribed to the campaign, in particular Caesar's inability to close with and destroy the Venetii.<sup>127</sup> This is evident as after he describes the defeat of the enemy, he focuses on the destruction of their naval power, such as the elimination of old and young males, and the elimination of the Venetii navy as a fighting force.<sup>128</sup> By contrast assets taken but not related to the naval issue, such as the town, receive little attention.<sup>129</sup> The resolution emphasises the elimination of those aspects of Venetian power that Caesar states were the problem in prosecuting the campaign, staying consistent with the overall narrative.

Although the elimination of enemy naval power would have been important in the historical encounter, the objective of reinforcing the campaign difficulties is evident as Caesar is more concerned to address and resolve the overall paradigm, than to reconstruct the circumstances of the actual confrontation.<sup>130</sup> The lack of a reconstructive purpose is evident in the presentation of enemy ship dispositions for battle, which are not designed to clarify the encounter. As Caesar states when the enemy first appear:

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<sup>127</sup> This is evident at 3.16 where it is explained why the Venetii surrendered. See also Lynn, (2003) p. 5. Lynn discusses the concept of decisive battle. While battle appears as decisive in Caesar's commentaries, the distinctive feature of his content is that it is not primarily reconstructive. See also Melchior (2004) p. 38 on the literary concept of a decisive battle, where battle is portrayed as part of a revenge cycle.

<sup>128</sup> 3.15.5, 3.16.2. In this instance the battle is described through to the end of the pursuit. See also pp. 304-306 below on the destruction of the Usipetes and Tencteri. Note also that this is unlike the Sabis River narrative at 2.27-2.28 where no pursuit is mentioned.

<sup>129</sup> See 3.16.3.

<sup>130</sup> See also the Tigurini discussed above at pp. 113-116.

Quae ubi convenit ac primum ab hostibus visa est, circiter CCXX naves eorum paratissimae atque omni genere armorum ornatissimae ex portu profectae nostris adversae constiterunt.<sup>131</sup>

Important information such as the spatial relationship of the fleets is absent, as are details regarding the Roman fleet, such as numbers and types of ships involved.<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, no information essential for understanding a naval battle is provided, such as initial weather conditions. The later description of a change in weather is particularly pertinent, as there are no preconditions for comparison.<sup>133</sup> Erickson regards the discrepancies between Caesar and Dio as the result of Dio's confusion regarding the start of the battle, this confusion evidence of how Caesar does not have the primary purpose of reconstruction in mind.<sup>134</sup> Such an omission is illustrative of Caesar's disinterest in establishing a full understanding of the battle.

The description of terrain also illustrates that the presentation is not designed to accurately address the topography of the battle.<sup>135</sup> Caesar describes the battle as fought close to shore, and he states that the crews could see and be seen from nearby high points.<sup>136</sup> This one terrain feature has no influence within the battle, and in particular the close proximity to shore has no effect on the ships. The presence of shoals, and the threat of running aground or any other possible dangers inherent in the location are all absent. Even the feature itself is described in a rudimentary fashion, so that the high points are not described as a headland, mouth of a river or using any other identifying epithets.<sup>137</sup> Rice Holmes has noted that such lack of clarity is not always the case in this campaign, supporting the idea that the battle displays even less detail than the basic data conveyed in the overall account.<sup>138</sup> The presence of this terrain feature within the passage is not an indicator that Caesar is providing a spatial

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<sup>131</sup> 3.14.2-3.14.3.

<sup>132</sup> See also Roman forces against the Belgae, only introduced where they support the topos. See pp. 78-79 above.

<sup>133</sup> 3.14.1-3.14.2. See also McDougall, (1991) p. 625 for a discussion of Dio 39.42 and Caesar may differ in regards to the start of the battle and the weather, as Dio is at least attempting to describe the environment on the day.

<sup>134</sup> Erickson (2002) p. 619.

<sup>135</sup> See also the selective use of terrain at Octodurus and in the first British Invasion discussed at pp. 164, 250 below.

<sup>136</sup> 3.14.8-3.14.9.

<sup>137</sup> See also Caesar's generic description of watercourses. Kraus (2005b) p. 243.

<sup>138</sup> See Rice Holmes p. 111, fn. 12, regarding *lingulis promunturiisque* at 3.12.1.



reference, as the terrain is given only a basic description and has no effect on the physical progress of the battle.

Important information regarding the motivation of the protagonists is also missing, further showing that explanation of the event itself is not the concern of the passage. Most notable is the omission of information as to why the Venetii decide to fight.<sup>139</sup> Even if they have no more towns to flee to, Caesar does not state so, and they simply sail out of a harbour.<sup>140</sup> Unlike other battles where the reasoning behind the enemy's decision is explored, and in marked contrast to the complex motivation earlier ascribed to the Venetii, there is little insight at the commencement of the engagement.<sup>141</sup> While the defence of the town seems the reason based on later interpretation, Caesar does not elaborate such details in contextualising the battle.

Similarly, Caesar does not account for why the Romans choose to fight.<sup>142</sup> He awaits the arrival of the fleet and then the two sides engage in combat. While he later states that the wind fell enabling the Romans to overtake the fleeing enemy, he does not account for why the Romans would choose to fight under initially less favourable conditions.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore he has built an expectation of Roman frustration throughout the campaign, as the Venetii have been superior in previous paradigmatic confrontations, and he gives no reason at the start of the account as to why the Romans believed this encounter would be different.<sup>144</sup> The early stages of the account are vague regarding tactical details even when these are important for establishing the reasons for battle, indicating a general lack of interest in communicating such minutiae.

In contrast to the lack of detail regarding the battle itself, the information has strong links to the presentation of the campaign, demonstrating that the choice of content is

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<sup>139</sup> See also the Germani discussed at pp. 167-168 below.

<sup>140</sup> 3.16.1-3.16.4.

<sup>141</sup> See Caesar's analysis of the Helvetii for an example 1.23.3. Also see 2.16.3 for analysis of the Nervii and their reasons for battle.

<sup>142</sup> See Dio 39.42 who seems to attempt to explain this, stating that Brutus stayed in port until the wind fell, and only ventured out when the weather was favourable.

<sup>143</sup> If it is presumed that the enemy attack as soon as the fleet arrives, the question still remains of why the Romans would arrive in the region and approach a hostile location if the weather is less than favourable. See 3.15.5 where the wind change is regarded as *opportuna*.

<sup>144</sup> 3.14.2-3.14.4. See 3.13.7-3.13.8 for the description of general combat between the ships.

aimed at addressing the broader context. The dangers of campaign addressed at the start of the episode are present in the description of the crews of the enemy ships, which represent every tribe, or type of armed man possible.<sup>145</sup> They represent a threat Caesar specified when he sent legates to the various parts of Gaul due to fear of a general uprising.<sup>146</sup> In this instance the description reinforces the fears regarding the threat of a general uprising, and the limited information provided has a direct association with the broader campaign.

Similarly, the general superiority of the Venetii throughout the passage is addressed through the dispositions for battle.<sup>147</sup> Only the numbers of Venetii ships are given, so no relationship can be established between the two sides and the number is of limited value for understanding the battle. Nevertheless these numbers address the general superiority of the Venetii fleet, which has been stated as numerically large on several occasions.<sup>148</sup> The use of *paratissimae* to describe the ships reinforces this concept, and although it does not provide any specific details regarding the nature of the preparations, it does serve to remind the audience of the skill of the Venetii at sea.<sup>149</sup> The choice of details selected therefore illustrates that Caesar is not trying to aid understanding of the event, but to reinforce a feature of the campaign regarding the enemy.

Even the main reconstructive episode in the battle bears important omissions due to the need to address the campaign and show how the campaign, not just the battle, is resolved. The final stage of the battle is largely reconstructive, but is still influenced by the purpose of addressing the campaign.<sup>150</sup> As Caesar states:

Ac iam conversis in eam partem navibus quo ventus ferebat, tanta subito malacia ac tranquillitas exstitit, ut se ex loco movere non possent. quae quidem res ad negotium conficiendum maximae fuit opportunitati. nam singulas nostri consecrati

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<sup>145</sup> *omni genere armorum ornatissimae* 3.14.2.

<sup>146</sup> 3.11.1-3.11.4.

<sup>147</sup> 3.14.1-3.14.3.

<sup>148</sup> See 3.8.1 for superiority at sea, and 3.9.6 for many ships compared to Romans, 3.12.3 for numbers again.

<sup>149</sup> 3.14.2.

<sup>150</sup> See also the primarily descriptive passage in the Octodurus narrative discussed at pp. 104-106 above.

expugnauerunt, ut perpaucae ex omni numero noctis inter ventu ad terram pervenirent, cum ab hora fere quarta usque ad solis occasum pugnaretur.<sup>151</sup>

Data regarding the battle is included here, such as the duration and an effective casualty report regarding the Venetii who are almost totally wiped out. Nevertheless the account lacks clarity due to the lack of Roman numbers, and it is uncertain if a numerically inferior Roman force hunt the Venetii down and surround them one by one, or if superior Roman numbers swamp the eventually becalmed ships.<sup>152</sup> This absence is explained as the objective is to capture the final obliteration of the Venetii fighting strength, and to resolve the issue of their elusiveness.

Combat is where the thematic link of the battle to the campaign is most clear. Caesar structures the account so that one technical factor, the *falces* that the Romans improvise, addresses and resolves the problems raised regarding the naval superiority of the enemy, and the narrative exaggerates its importance in bringing to end the ability of the enemy to outmanoeuvre or flee the Romans.<sup>153</sup> This resolving device is highly literary and not an indication of technological determinism in the account, as Caesar may be misrepresenting the manner in which the *falx* is deployed, in order to create a singular resolution to battle and campaign. The use of the hooks is certainly a tempting technological reason to explain the result of battle, and Rey in particular notes that military history has a tendency towards technological determinism, especially in intra-ethnic conflicts.<sup>154</sup> However Roland notes that technological descriptions are not necessarily designed to be schemata, but are literary descriptions and adhere to literary, not deterministic criteria.<sup>155</sup> Therefore the description of technological details such as ships or *falces* should not automatically be accorded status within the work as technological artefacts alone. The artefact adheres to the literary rules as much as speeches or any other literary structures designed to meet

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<sup>151</sup> 3.15.3-3.15.5.

<sup>152</sup> While Caesar might not be expected to list Roman casualties for self-promotion reasons, this does not mean that their absence is not part of a broader design in his approach to narration. In this case his purpose is to resolve the ability of the enemy to escape, by specifically showing their failure to do so in this instance.

<sup>153</sup> Conley (1983) p. 181. These are hooks, similar to wall spears according to Caesar at 3.14.5-3.14.8.

<sup>154</sup> See Rey (2010) p. 36 on intra ethnic conflicts, and pp. 21-22, 52 for further discussion of technology. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 73-105 on the relationship of *virtus* and technology.

<sup>155</sup> See Roland (1991) p. 97.

authorial aims.<sup>156</sup> The device is a technological artefact, but in this case can be given prominence due to its importance in addressing and resolving the issues of the campaign.

The persuasive role of the hooks is evident in their role as a resolving device, referring back to the ongoing issue of enemy naval superiority, as they ensure that this superiority is overcome through the course of the battle narrative. The literary importance of the *falces* is evident as their position in the narrative ensures they have the most impact as a resolving device, and Caesar is very clearly limiting their presence to the battle itself in the following statement:

Neque satis Bruto, qui classi praeerat, vel tribunis militum centurionibusque, quibus singulae naves erant attributae, constabat quid agerent aut quam rationem pugnae insisterent. Rostro enim noceri non posse cognoverant; turribus autem excitatis tamen has altitudo puppium ex barbaris navibus superabat, ut neque ex inferiore loco satis commode tela adigi possent et missa a Gallis gravius acciderent.<sup>157</sup>

Caesar presents the matter as if the Romans have no solution to the speed of the enemy, and describes how they enter battle with almost no way of countering the enemy naval capabilities.<sup>158</sup> This is further apparent in the following passage:

Una erat magno usui res praeparata ab nostris, falces praeacutae insertae adfixaeque longuriis, non absimili forma muralium falcium. his cum funes qui antemnas ad malos destinabant, comprehensi adductique erant, navigio remis incitato prae rumpebantur. quibus abscisis antemnae necessario concidebant, ut cum omnis Gallicis navibus spes in velis armamentisque consisteret, his ereptis omnis usus navium uno tempore eriperetur.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> See Raudzens (1990) in general for a discussion of the dichotomy between technology and victory. See also Dodington (1980) p. 9 on the similarity between engineering and speeches in terms of literary purpose.

<sup>157</sup> 3.14.3-3.14.5.

<sup>158</sup> Dodington (1980) p. 34 regards the absence of planning by the commanders as designed to undermine any engineering skill in his subordinates. However, it is not possible to determine the actual conditions except that Caesar wishes the battle to be envisaged as where the hooks are first used.

<sup>159</sup> 3.14.5-3.14.8.

As the above passage demonstrates, the description of *falx* construction is brought within the battle narrative itself, ensuring that precautions designed to defeat the enemy and any mention of their implementation only appears as part of the battle when the issue is finally resolved. The absence of previous battles where activity such as the construction of countermeasures could be addressed suits the generation of this impression, and is supported by the statement that the commanders do not know what to do prior to the confrontation.<sup>160</sup> However, as suggested through *magno usui* it is most likely these hooks were constructed beforehand in the historical campaign, and the fleet was much more prepared for combat than the indecision of the commanders would suggest.<sup>161</sup> The commanders must have been aware of activity on their ships, in particular as the *falces* must have been distributed widely among the ships in order to be effective.<sup>162</sup> Therefore in delaying description of the *falces* until the battle Caesar may deliberately exaggerate the uncertainty of the commanders, in order to create a suitable introduction of the device. The battle is when the countermeasure is first envisaged and deployed, as the text suggests the Romans enter battle with no plan or method prepared earlier.

In contrast to the reconstructive difficulties associated with the construction of the *falx*, the persuasive role is apparent as Caesar gives this one device a powerful causal position in the narrative. He states that in spite of the difficulties faced against the largely invulnerable Venetii ships, that this one thing is in favour of the Romans, and the construction of *falces* allows them to cut the rigging.<sup>163</sup> The instrument's role in the battle is evident as once they are brought into use, the Romans are able to resolve the affair in hand-to-hand combat, and he states:

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<sup>160</sup> Levick (1992) p 64, fn. 24 notes how prior scholars have deduced the presence of previous battles in the actual campaign. Caesar states the *falces* were made *magno usui* at 3.14.5. This supports this conclusion that they were developed earlier than the battle. See above p. 140 for the commanders at a loss as to what to do.

<sup>161</sup> See McDougall (1991) p. 625. Matthews (2010) p. 65 notes a similar situation in regards to Plutarch *Marius* 25 and changes to the *pilum*.

<sup>162</sup> While Dodington (1980) p. 34 argues that the hooks are attributed to the men, he regards this as part of a pattern of Caesar emphasising his own technical skills over his officers.

<sup>163</sup> See 3.14.4-3.14.6 for both the invulnerability of ships to rams or boarding, and the mitigating factor of the hooks.

Ut cum omnis Gallicis navibus spes in velis armamentisque consisteret, his ereptis omnis usus navium uno tempore eriperetur. reliquum erat certamen positum in virtute.<sup>164</sup>

The use of *falces* cancels out the facility of the enemy with regard to their ships, allowing the affair to be decided by *virtus*, indicating that the hooks are highly decisive for the result.<sup>165</sup> They appear instrumental in resolving the affair and allowing the Romans to triumph in shipboard combat, illustrating their role as a resolving device.

The presentation of the hooks serves to resolve the issue of general Venetii superiority, but its literary role is apparent as it comes at the expense of details essential to understand the battle. Caesar proceeds to a description of the *falces* without describing any activity in the battle prior to their use, and some important information is omitted in favour of this emphasis. One important aspect of the battle omitted is any reference to manoeuvres. Manoeuvres would form the preconditions under which the hooks are brought into operation, and would have been a significant factor in the historical Roman victory.<sup>166</sup> Caesar is also vague on pertinent details such as whether the Venetii ships rely solely on sails, or used a combination of sails and oars.<sup>167</sup> The hooks operate on the sails, and it is also unclear how far the enemy would rely on sails in closing with the Romans, as ships would have most likely cleared their decks for close combat or protection from fire. At the very least the sails would be relatively superfluous in determining victory once close combat began.<sup>168</sup> While the *falces* allow the flight of the enemy to be prevented, this explains the eventual capitulation of the enemy and does not account for the initial act of closing

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<sup>164</sup> 3.14.7-3.14.8.

<sup>165</sup> Erickson (2002) p. 611 explains the battle in terms of superior Roman *virtus*, with technology merely cancelling out the enemy naval advantage. This ethnographic interpretation, while possibly explaining the representation of the enemy, does not account for the emphasis Caesar places on other difficulties such as terrain, and his apparent need to explain the campaign's problems.

<sup>166</sup> See 3.14.2-3.14.3. See also the absence of cavalry manoeuvre in the Usipetes account, and the movement of auxiliaries in Belgae account discussed at pp. 216, 315 below.

<sup>167</sup> 3.13.7 is the only mention of oarage and this is in regards to Roman ships.

<sup>168</sup> See Casson (1971) pp. 121ff for a general discussion of naval combat, boarding and common use of marines over rams. The issue of clearing for action is less certain. However the main issue is that the use of hooks on poles indicates that the ships have already closed with one another, and that the sails should no longer be relevant in the ensuing close combat. The sails seem only relevant to the flight, raising the question of what was actually occurring on this battlefield when the hooks were put into use. It is entirely possible they were only used as part of preventing the flight of the enemy. This is how Dio regards their use at 39.43.4.

with the ships, and the ability of the Romans to cut the lines only accounts for part of the battle. The presence of the *falx* as a resolving device in the narrative is apparent as the technical explanation is insufficient to explain the result of the battle.

Caesar has been highly selective in his choice of technical content, to create the impression that the *falces* are the critical feature of the battle. This is evident in the description of hand-to-hand combat, which ignores the other technical aspect of the Venetii ships, that being their superior size and defensibility. Close combat is described in two instances as follows:

Reliquum erat certamen positum in virtute, qua nostri milites facile superabant.

...milites summa vi transcendere in hostium naves contendebant.<sup>169</sup>

In both instances *virtus* is featured as an aspect of combat.<sup>170</sup> Nevertheless the statement does not address or explain how the Romans physically overcome the ship height of the enemy which affects both missile fire and presumably the ability of the Romans to board.<sup>171</sup> The Romans are not slowed nor do they suffer casualties, and Caesar shows that once he has addressed and overcome technical superiority, he abandons further technical data related to combat.<sup>172</sup> Also in spite of an earlier statement that the enemy ships allow missiles to be thrown with ease, there is no mention of the effectiveness of this against the Roman boarders.<sup>173</sup> Caesar in effect abandons the height advantage once the hooks have resolved the issue of closing with the enemy. In omitting this detail he demonstrates selectivity regarding technical matters through the description of one factor on the battlefield. He is not intent on recreating all the physical circumstances under which the Roman troops actually fought.

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<sup>169</sup> 3.14.8, 3.15.1-3.15.2.

<sup>170</sup> See Lendon (1999) pp. 313-314, 318-319 on *virtus* in general. This also explains the absence of *virtus* among the Venetii that Erickson interprets as a disparagement of Venetii courage. See 3.5.3 for *virtus* in the Octodurus passage, where a similar situation arises in Caesar's account and *virtus* is used to explain the Roman sally and issues such as maneuver, numbers and even tiredness.

<sup>171</sup> See 3.13.8, 3.14.4 on the height of the enemy ships.

<sup>172</sup> See also the missing terrain in Usipetes and Tencteri, discussed above at p. 55 and the missing wagons in the Germanic battle, discussed below at pp. 153-154.

<sup>173</sup> 3.14.8-3.14.9, 3.15.1-3.15.3. The reference is to missile weapons being discharged from the higher ships, which has an effect on the ability to fight at close quarters.

Importantly, no heavier missile weapons are described, such as the use of catapults or scorpions. Caesar specifically mentioned *tormenta* as available against the Belgae in Book Two, and in the actual campaign he had time to build or mount such equipment on his ships, as this campaign lasted all summer.<sup>174</sup> Furthermore he clearly had some siege weapons with him by the time of the British invasion, which were mounted on ships and given an important role in the landings there.<sup>175</sup> Therefore the absence of heavier equipment in the Venetii narrative is not likely due to their absence in the historical campaign. Their exclusion may indicate that the account is focused primarily on the *falces* and only documents the use of other tools, such as the failure of the ram, when they serve to address his interpretation of the campaign.

The objective of resolving the campaign with this device is apparent as once the hooks are implemented, the account is universally presented in a positive manner. The campaign has been presented negatively so far, and no positive interpretation of battle is given prior to the description of how the *falces* function, indicating that they have been given pre-eminence as the first successful Roman activity in the campaign.<sup>176</sup> The battle goes all the Romans' way once the hooks have been deployed and no setbacks of any sort are mentioned.<sup>177</sup> The Romans triumph easily in hand-to-hand combat, meeting little resistance, as is clear in the statement: *nostri milites facile superabant*.<sup>178</sup> Even the weather goes the way of the Romans, and while this does not mean Caesar has lied about conditions, his use of *opportunitas* shows that he is unremittingly positive after the hooks are used.<sup>179</sup> The campaign narrative hinges on their use, as once they are used the tone of the account entirely changes to the positive resolution.

Caesar's selectivity regarding the resolution of the affair is again evident as a major aspect of his justification for war is not fully resolved in the episode. He is very

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<sup>174</sup> See 2.8.4 for *tormenta* described in the fortifications. Caesar certainly had artillery equipment with him in the historical campaign, as is evident in the Belgae confrontation. He had plenty of time to equip his ships as he states that this campaign was fought over summer.

<sup>175</sup> See 4.25.1-4.25.2. It is clear that *tormenta* were mounted on boats in the British invasion.

<sup>176</sup> See 3.14-3.15 and above at p. 140.

<sup>177</sup> 3.14.8-3.15.5.

<sup>178</sup> 3.14.8.

<sup>179</sup> 3.15.5. See also pp. 309-310 below for a change in tone in the Usipetes and Tencteri account.



particular at the start of the passage to emphasise the culpability of the Venetii with regard to the detention of legates, this being described as contrary to the rules of nations.<sup>180</sup> Nevertheless the fate of the Roman legates after the campaign is not described, and whether they survived or not appears of less importance to his resolution than the issues of the campaign itself.<sup>181</sup> Moreover he makes no further reference to the exemplary nature of the Venetii in inspiring revolt, so that the battle only serves to resolve local issues in the text and is not contextualised within the concerns that he initially addressed.<sup>182</sup> While Caesar follows his description of this campaign with the activity of Sabinus and other subordinates, he makes no assessment of the effect that the defeat of the Venetii had on the threat of general uprising.<sup>183</sup> In doing so he demonstrates that the subject that the battle is designed to resolve is highly selective, and directed at the set of difficulties he faced in prosecuting the overall affair.

The persuasive role of the battle against the Venetii can be seen as it is primarily designed to address the campaign first, with a coherent and full understanding of the battle itself placed secondary to this main concern. The content, particularly the emphasis on the *falces*, is more important to an understanding of how Caesar understands and presents the episode as a whole, rather than to address the battle. Caesar uses the *falx* in order to resolve the theme of ongoing difficulties, and while the use of the tool in the historical battle is not disputed, the device is given a prominent position in order to resolve the theme of naval strength. Other aspects of the narrative, such as the numbers and the cutting of the sails, while problematic in terms of reconstruction, all address this thematic concern. The account of the Venetii shows how the battle narrative and the description of a particular campaign can be inseparable in terms of the information provided, Caesar's persuasive objectives, and the manner that combat is presented to support these overall concerns.

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<sup>180</sup> 3.9.3.

<sup>181</sup> See 3.8.2, 3.10.1-3.10.3.

<sup>182</sup> See above pp. 126-135.

<sup>183</sup> See 3.17.1ff for Sabinus and the events that follow the battle.

## Ariovistus, Caesar and the Germanic Reputation in Battle

An examination of the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani in Book One reveals that it is also designed to support the contention of the campaign, in this case to assert that Caesar's interpretation of the Germani, and the superiority of Roman *virtus*, is correct.<sup>184</sup> The narrative raises the German martial reputation in the description of negotiations with Ariovistus, then describes Caesar's own opinion of it in the mutiny at Vesontio, and finally proves his assessment right in the battle.<sup>185</sup> Combat circumstances, episodes within the battle, and contextual details all have a thematic connection to the antecedent passages on the Germanic reputation, and aim to dispel the idea of their martial superiority through the battle narrative.<sup>186</sup> As Jervis notes, the Germanic reputation far exceeds their abilities, and it is this underlying argument that extends from the campaign narrative through to the resolution of the battle.<sup>187</sup> It is an argument that would appeal to a parochial Roman audience and portray Caesar positively at the same time, as it impresses them with his understanding of war and the enemy. Information is included to show Roman mastery over the enemy, and the correctness of his initial assessment that reputation of the Germani in war is unfounded.

Caesar establishes early in the episode his pattern of argument and addresses the importance of the Germanic reputation, particularly for *virtus*, as he describes the Germanic leader boasting about this very quality.<sup>188</sup> As he recounts of Ariovistus' words: ...*intellecturum quid invicti Germani, exercitatissimi in armis, qui inter annos*

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<sup>184</sup> 1.31-53. See Martin Jr. (1965) and more recently James (2000) on the mutiny and the representation of Caesar. See also Ramage (2001) on the justification for war. See Martin Jr. (1965) p. 65 who notes another theme "Ariovistus the Ingrate". Another major concern of the passage overall is the movement of the Germani into Gaul and the justification for war. See Riggsby (2006) pp.178-189, Heubner (1974) pp. 149-170; Christ (1974) p. 257-292. Christ p. 271 notes problematic aspects of Ariovistus' behaviour as represented. This section focuses on the construction of the battle in regards to the Germanic reputation.

<sup>185</sup> There are also general similarities between this battle and Plutarch *Marius* 13-27. See also James (2000) p. 58, Melchior (2004) p. 39, Lendon (1999) p. 313.

<sup>186</sup> Melchior (2004) pp. 39-42 notes a vengeance pattern to the overall passage.

<sup>187</sup> Jervis (2001) p. 80.

<sup>188</sup> On the representation of Ariovistus see Martin Jr. (1965) pp. 64-65; Ramage (2001) p. 164; Nousek (2006) pp. 67-68. On enemy boasting see Riggsby (2006) p. 49-59. See also Diodorus Siculus 5.29.3, 5.31.1, Strabo *Geog* 4.4.5. Note however that boasting is often in reference to Gauls. McDougall (1991) p. 621 notes how the presentation of Ariovistus' speech echoes the battle in defining Germanic behaviour. Barlow (1998) p. 145 notes three uses of *arrogantia* in the whole work, two of which are used in the description of this Germanic campaign at 1.33.5, 1.4.4.

*XIII tectum non subissent, virtute possent.*<sup>189</sup> Ariovistus' boast is not only an early reference to martial skill, but appears in indirect speech, drawing attention to the claim.<sup>190</sup> More importantly, it appears as a challenge, an insult to Rome that must be answered.<sup>191</sup> Just as Ariovistus must be defeated in battle, it should also be recognised that his claims might also be addressed.<sup>192</sup> This is particularly so as emphasis on *virtus* continues throughout the account, with the word directly employed eight times in the campaign narrative.<sup>193</sup> It appears evident that Caesar gives the quality pre-eminence, both through direct speech, in which a challenge is raised, and through an ongoing reference to the concept.

Caesar includes in Book One an extended passage describing a mutiny at Vesontio, a highly problematic passage in self-promotional terms, which nevertheless allows him to address the narrative objective.<sup>194</sup> In the *Bellum Civile*, he makes no mention of the two major mutinies that occurred, despite them being resolved successfully by the time he wrote.<sup>195</sup> In the *Bellum Gallicum*, however, the reluctance of the troops to fight against the Germans, a mutiny in all effects, is given an extended narrative.<sup>196</sup> The inclusion of a mutiny is ostensibly at odds with ideas of self-promotion. Its inclusion in the *Bellum Gallicum* is indicative of how strongly the theme of the Germanic reputation has influenced Caesar's choice of content.<sup>197</sup> Even potentially damaging information is included if it serves a thematic purpose, in this case the martial reputation of the enemy.

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<sup>189</sup> 1.36.7. See also 1.44. Nousek (2004) p. 146 also notes how individuals emphasise themes that run throughout work.

<sup>190</sup> See also Nordling (1991) p. 168.

<sup>191</sup> See Lendon (1999) p. 311 on the idea of a challenge. Note that not all enemy claims are answered, see pp. 325-326 below, however note that these other statements do not include directly address Caesar as this one does.

<sup>192</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 171 notes the personal aspect of the battle and Ariovistus. See Pitcher (2007) on characterisation in general.

<sup>193</sup> *Virtus* is used eight times in the episode, of a total of 68 in the work, a frequency that suggests intention to address the quality. While Murphy (1977) p. 235 sees *timor* as the theme of Ariovistus episode, the frequency of the word *virtus* strongly suggests it is the direct theme.

<sup>194</sup> Note this is the specific reputation Caesar has defined in the mutiny passage.

<sup>195</sup> See Suetonius *Div Iul* 69-70. See Fantham (1985) p. 120 for a discussion of the mutinies in the civil wars and their suppression in Caesar. See also Powell (1998) p. 115.

<sup>196</sup> 1.39-40.

<sup>197</sup> James (2000) examines generally how the mutiny supports Caesar's self-representation. However it is important to note that the mutiny passage raises concepts that extend through to the battle.

The references that are raised in Ariovistus' boasts, and that carry through to the battle narrative itself are directly addressed in the mutiny. The introduction of the mutiny demonstrates that Caesar continues to develop the ideas:

Dum paucos dies ad Vesontionem rei frumentariae commeatusque causa moratur, ex percontatione nostrorum vocibusque Gallorum ac mercatorum, qui ingenti magnitudine corporum Germanos, incredibili virtute atque exercitatione in armis esse praedicabant, saepe numero sese cum his congressos ne vultum quidem atque aciem oculorum dicebant ferre potuisse...<sup>198</sup>

This passage elaborates and reiterates the contention that the Germani have a particularly fierce reputation in battle, and describes the reasons for such a reputation. They are reputed to be particularly large, and skilled in arms, and most importantly *incredibili virtute*, attributes that support and develop the ideas that Ariovistus claims.<sup>199</sup> Pitcher notes that Caesar portrays such claims as wild and excessive, as the content of the passage describes the reaction of the men in hyperbolic terms, with weeping and the writing of wills evidence of the extreme reaction of the troops.<sup>200</sup> For Pitcher, this is designed so that there is no faith in their judgement and therefore the audience is sceptical of stories of Germanic prowess. Whether this particular interpretation is intended by Caesar, the narrative nevertheless shows an acute awareness of how the Germani are perceived and the role that their reputation plays in the conflict.

Following the mutiny passage other details are included in order to address the prowess of the enemy, even when these play no part in contextualising the battle. This is evident in the description of martial techniques, which demonstrate their skill in battle but have no relevance to the course of the battle. Caesar states of Germanic fighting methods:

Ariovistus his omnibus diebus exercitum castris continuit, equestri proelio cotidie contendit. genus hoc erat pugnae quo se Germani exercuerant: equitum milia erant

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<sup>198</sup> 1.39.1. Pitcher (2007) pp. 107-108 notes the purpose of "building up" in ancient historiography.

<sup>199</sup> See Riggsby (2006) 49-59.

<sup>200</sup> Pitcher (2007) p. 108. See also Gelzer (1968) p. 171 fn. 8. Gelzer notes how the representation of Caesar's own hysterical tribunes may be directed at some of the aristocrats in his own army.

sex, totidem numero pedites velocissimi ac fortissimi, quos ex omni copia singuli singulos suae salutis causa delegerant; cum his in proeliis versabantur, ad hos se equites recipiebant; hi, si quid erat durius, concurrebant; si qui graviore vulnere accepto equo deciderat, circumstiebant; si quo erat longius prodeundum aut celerius recipiendum, tanta erat horum exercitatione celeritas, ut iubis equorum sublevati cursum adaequarent.<sup>201</sup>

This description is not designed to illustrate the course of combat, as it does not have any apparent bearing on the way the skirmishes are resolved.<sup>202</sup> More importantly, it does not serve any context for the main battle, which only includes infantry activity.<sup>203</sup> As the use of *si* shows, this is a general description of fighting techniques, one that demonstrates the Germanic skill in combat.<sup>204</sup> While it is not directly influential in explaining the course of combat, it is illustrative of the *exercitatio* of the enemy in arms. The passage is therefore indicative of the construction of the account, which is primarily to address the alleged prowess of the Germani.

### Caesar's Assessment of the Reputation

While the issue of the Germanic reputation is an ongoing concern, Caesar also provides his own opinion of this in the Vesontio account, formulating a response that informs the construction of the battle narrative.<sup>205</sup> James has examined how Caesar creates himself as an authoritative figure in this passage, but it is also important to note that he specifically addresses the issue of *virtus*, and that the enemy reputation is exaggerated when he states:

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<sup>201</sup> 1.48.4-1.48.7.

<sup>202</sup> See 1.48-1.49. The description is there to simply visualise how the enemy wage their cavalry engagements, and this description of Germani tactics appears at a point where Caesar is describing five consecutive days of cavalry engagements between the two forces, while the main elements are held in camp. Caesar does not state who won these engagements, or the effect on morale or even his own assessment of the spirit of the two sides. There is simply no result to these encounters, either physically or psychologically.

<sup>203</sup> See 1.51-1.53 for the battle.

<sup>204</sup> These are open conditionals.

<sup>205</sup> 1.39-1.41.

...cur de sua virtute aut de ipsius diligentia desperarent? factum eius hostis periculum patrum nostrorum memoria, cum Cimbris et Teutonis a C. Mario pulsus non minorem laudem exercitus quam ipse imperator meritus videbatur...<sup>206</sup>

Caesar in these passages overturns the concept of Germanic prowess with an appeal to history, one of three that he makes in this account in order to show that the enemy can be beaten.<sup>207</sup> In this case, he establishes that he regards the reputation as false, thereby setting up a paradigm for interpretation of the ensuing battle.

Furthermore, Caesar shows the extent of his dismissal of such rumours in this passage, further supporting his understanding for battle in this episode. He states he would lead the Tenth Legion alone against the enemy if necessary, an idea that shows his contempt for their reputation, and for their numbers which are much greater than his own:

Quodsi praeterea nemo sequatur, tamen se cum sola decima legione iturum, de qua non dubitaret, sibi eam praetoriam cohortem futuram. huic Caesar legioni indulserat praecipue et propter virtutem confidebat maxime.<sup>208</sup>

Since Caesar would lead one legion alone against the enemy he provides a potential state that indicates his opinion of their reputation.<sup>209</sup> He establishes the context for how such an argument should be resolved, as he has absolute confidence in the Roman ability to prevail.<sup>210</sup> He thereby provides a precedent for understanding how the battle should resolve itself in order to prove that he is correct.

Moreover, Caesar's speech at the mutiny is eventually reinforced by the responses of the men, who act as internal supporters of his opinion and are not only persuaded to accept his judgement in such matters, but actively agree with his assessment:

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<sup>206</sup> 1.40.4-1.40.5. James (2000) details the three appeals at pp. 58-60. James notes the self-promotional nature of the passage, and that Caesar is showing the Germani can be beaten.

<sup>207</sup> See 1.40.5-1.40.6, 1.40.7-1.40.10. See James (2000) p. 60.

<sup>208</sup> 1.40.15.

<sup>209</sup> Also note that this shows Caesar's lack of fear.

<sup>210</sup> James (2000) p. 58. The speech of Caesar at Vesontio refers specifically to Marius and the Cimbri. Caesar in the speech shows that the Romans are always better in battle.

Deinde reliquae legiones cum tribunis militum et primorum ordinum centurionibus egerunt, uti per eos Caesari satis facerent; se neque umquam dubitasse neque timuisse neque de summa belli suum iudicium, sed imperatoris esse existimavisse.<sup>211</sup>

As this passage illustrates, Caesar's judgement is accepted as correct, his contempt for the rumours supported by the army.<sup>212</sup> He therefore includes within the account secondary narrators who support his opinion of the enemy reputation as they are persuaded by his arguments.<sup>213</sup> Through the use of the soldiers in the resolution of the mutiny Caesar sets the terms for the forthcoming confrontation, and his own assessment of how events should be resolved.

In the description of activity prior to the battle the Tenth Legion appears as an *exemplum*, one that is particularly dismissive of the enemy reputation.<sup>214</sup> Caesar not only proposes advancing with just this one legion, but later establishes their lack of concern as one individual expresses a joke at the idea of being mounted, showing his utter disregard for danger, in marked contrast to the earlier fear of the army.<sup>215</sup> Furthermore, when tested in a preliminary skirmish, the Tenth Legion performs as expected, obeying orders and confirming the commander's assessment of their *virtus*.<sup>216</sup> The extensive and sometimes anecdotal details provided regarding the Tenth Legion suggest they are utilised to support the idea that the reputation of the Germani enemy is unfounded.

Caesar furthermore shows that the rumours of enemy prowess are unsubstantiated when Ariovistus is shown acting contrary to his own boasts. Ariovistus demonstrates an element of fearfulness when he makes the following demand:

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<sup>211</sup> 1.41.3-1.41.4.

<sup>212</sup> James (2000) p. 61. See also after a skirmish at 1.46.4, and 4.14 in Book Four.

<sup>213</sup> See Martin Jr. (1965) p. 64 on secondary narrators.

<sup>214</sup> See pp. 116-123 above on the use of *exempla* and other anecdotes.

<sup>215</sup> 1.42.5-1.42.6.

<sup>216</sup> 1.46.1-1.46.4. Note however that the Tenth Legion plays no part in battle, as the objective is to show overall Roman superiority.

Ariovistus postulavit ne quem peditem ad conloquium Caesar adduceret: vereri se ne per insidias ab eo circumveniretur; uterque cum equitatu veniret; alia ratione sese non esse venturum.<sup>217</sup>

This comment is very unusual as an attribute of motivation, as Ariovistus appears more afraid of being surrounded by infantry than cavalry.<sup>218</sup> There is no attempt to explain this as an attempt by Ariovistus to have an advantage, however his behaviour suggests a lack of confidence in Germanic *virtus*.<sup>219</sup> Through the activity of the meeting, Caesar demonstrates a contrast between the earlier boasts and Ariovistus' own trust in such abilities.

### Virtus and the Array of Battle

The role of the battle in supporting Caesar's assessment is evident as the Germanic reputation for martial skill and courage is one of the main issues in constructing the battle narrative. This is most apparent in the dispositions of the forces and the reasoning described for the battle, at which point Caesar establishes contrasts that examine the nature of courage on each side, and the relative superiority of Roman *virtus*. These contextual details are provided to support the literary role of the passage, such details not providing enough detail about the battle to be useful for a full understanding, or not referenced again once the battle is described. Instead the introduction to battle reinforces the message that the reputation of the Germani is an idle boast, and shows that with regard to martial prowess the Romans not only match the enemy, but are clearly superior.

Details regarding the disposition of forces appear designed to establish the conditions for a direct comparison of *virtus*. Caesar describes the dispositions on the day of the battle as follows:

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<sup>217</sup> 1.42.4-1.42.5.

<sup>218</sup> Pelling (1981) p. 761 believes Caesar feared the Germanic cavalry in the historical encounter. However in the written account Ariovistus is the one more afraid of the Roman infantry. This may also reflect Ariovistus' desire to have superior military support at the meeting.

<sup>219</sup> See 1.36.7 for the boasting of *virtus*.



Postridie eius diei Caesar praesidio utrisque castris, quod satis esse visum est, reliquit, alarios omnes in conspectu hostium pro castris minoribus constituit, quod minus multitudine militum legionariorum pro hostium numero valebat, ut ad speciem alariis uteretur...

Ipsae triplici instructa acie usque ad castra hostium accessit. Tum demum necessario Germani suas copias castris eduxerunt generatimque constituerunt paribus intervallis, Harudes, Marcomanos, Tribocos, Vangiones, Nemetes, Sedusios, Suebos...<sup>220</sup>

These dispositions differentiate the sides to prepare for the resolution of the issue of reputation once combat commences.<sup>221</sup> The forces are only identified in their basic form to demonstrate that this is a contest of Roman against Germanic infantry, with the absence of Roman auxiliaries from the front line, and a total absence of references to Germanic cavalry.<sup>222</sup> The main concept communicated is that this is an essential meeting of Roman infantry and the Germanic tribes, with no details such as numbers given regarding the size of the forces.<sup>223</sup> The only important detail is relative, that the Romans have fewer numbers, making it clear that in the numerical contest, the Romans are actually at a disadvantage on a man-to man basis.<sup>224</sup> Therefore, in the description of the disposition of the forces, the details prepare the narrative for a resolution to the ongoing concern with the Germanic reputation.

Through the dispositions for battle Caesar addresses the issue of *virtus* in order to contrast from where each side receives its inspiration for battle, and to illustrate the superiority of the Roman influences on courage and performance in battle.<sup>225</sup> The contrast is evident in the way witnesses and sources of courage for the two sides are portrayed:

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<sup>220</sup> 1.51.1-1.51.2.

<sup>221</sup> Mannetter (1995) p. 149 notes the use of asyndeton here to give the impression of size regarding the Germanic forces.

<sup>222</sup> Despite all the description of Germani cavalry fighting techniques, they have no existence within the battle narrative, nor is there even a mention of whether they were absent, neutralised, or ineffective.

<sup>223</sup> See pp. 50-51 above on the numbers for this battle.

<sup>224</sup> On the topos of enemy numbers see above pp. 71-79.

<sup>225</sup> Jervis (2001) p. 80. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 86-96 on the source of *virtus*. For Riggsby, experience is also a related quality.

Omnemque aciem suam raedis et carris circumdederunt, ne qua spes in fuga relinqueretur. Eo mulieres imposuerunt, quae ad proelium proficiscentes passis manibus flentes implorabant, ne se in servitutem Romanis traderent.

Caesar singulis legionibus singulos legatos et quaestorem praefecit, uti eos testes suae quisque virtutis haberet; ipse a dextro cornu, quod eam partem minime firmam hostium esse animadverterat, proelium commisit.<sup>226</sup>

In the first passage, an important source of Germanic motivation is described, with women weeping and imploring their men. The women are not encouraging their men, but foreshadowing the consequences of defeat with the words: *ne se in servitutem Romanis traderent*.<sup>227</sup> These details also have little influence in the battle narrative itself, demonstrating that they are included to establish this contrast of motivating factors. The women appear on wagons that play no part in the course of the battle, neither impeding the eventual flight of the Germani nor being mentioned as an obstacle to pursuit.<sup>228</sup> This is in marked contrast to Tacitus' account of fighting in Britain against Boudicca, as in his account wagons have a recognisable presence on the battlefield once combat begins.<sup>229</sup> The description therefore appears to exist largely to explain the source of Germanic courage, all of which involve the prevention of flight.<sup>230</sup> By contrast, the Roman source of morale is much more positive, as Caesar describes officers appointed to legions to witness, rather than to cajole, courage in the men.<sup>231</sup> As the Roman orders directly follow the passage about the women, this issue

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<sup>226</sup> 1.51.1-1.51.3. Lendon (1999) p. 314.

<sup>227</sup> 1.51.3. See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 78-81 on the topos.

<sup>228</sup> 1.51.2. Kraus (2007) p. 375 notes of Quintilian 8.3.66-8.3.70 that details must first be focalized by a human perspective i.e. a witness within the text. This may also be an explanation for the presence of the women.

<sup>229</sup> Contrast Tacitus *Ann* 14.37 and the battle of Watling St. Caesar states that the women lined up in the wagons to prevent retreat by the Germani, a practice Tacitus also reports among the Britons. Unlike in Tacitus however, the women and wagons play no part in Caesar's battle. They do not prevent escape, hinder the pursuit or serve as a rallying point for the Germani. They, like the cavalry, disappear from the narrative. Caesar does not completely account for something, illustrating that the interest lies in the practice, not the effect on the battle.

<sup>230</sup> This seems to work in opposition to the idea that the further from Rome, the tougher the enemy, as in this case the source of enemy strength is compared poorly to that of the Romans. See Jervis (2001) p. 63. As Jervis notes at p. 80 the Germanic reputation does not stand up in actual battle.

<sup>231</sup> While commanders certainly appear to be witnesses to the bravery of men, Caesar disposing of his officers to do so is an unusual addition to the narrative. See 1.21, 2.20, 4.22, 4.23, 7.40, 7.45, and 7.49, for comparisons. Caesar usually only describes his orders when he wants a particular manoeuvre or action performed. It seems unlikely that this is the actual command he gave.

of motivation is directly contrasted. The Germans have their wives; the Romans have their commanders to inspire them.<sup>232</sup> In the dispositions of the two forces, distinguishing features that contrast the sides and demonstrate the superiority of the Romans are selected.

Caesar further presents the attitude of the Germani towards battle to indicate their lack of courage, and that the reputation they have for warfare is unfounded in practice. He shows that the Germani fight according to dictates other than courage, as their matrons determine what is auspicious for battle.<sup>233</sup> Whether this is why they are reluctant on the day of battle is unclear, but when he states: *tum demum necessario Germani suas copias castris eduxerunt* he describes an enemy that appears neither eager for battle nor confident of victory.<sup>234</sup> The representation of enemy motivation in the preparations for battle undermines their reputation, indicating that these details are included to support the earlier assessment by Caesar.

### The Germanic Reputation in Combat

The combat passage is critical as a resolution to the issue of reputation, and the description of the fighting is designed to differentiate the two sides clearly, just as motivation was directly contrasted in the array of battle. Caesar describes the clash of infantry in the following terms:

Ita nostri acriter in hostes signo dato impetum fecerunt, itaque hostes repente celeriterque procurrerunt, ut spatium pila in hostes coniciendi non daretur. Relictis pilis comminus gladiis pugnatum est. at Germani celeriter ex consuetudine sua phalange facta impetus gladiatorum exceperunt. reperti sunt complures nostri, qui in phalangem insilirent et scuta manibus revellerent et desuper vulnerarent. cum hostium acies a sinistro cornu pulsa atque in fugam coniecta esset, a dextro cornu vehementer multitudine suorum nostram aciem premebant.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See also the contrast of Roman *virtus* and Gallic ingenuity at Avaricum discussed at pp. 165-166 below.

<sup>233</sup> 1.50.4-1.50.5. Contrast the Nervii eagerness for battle discussed at pp. 200-201 below.

<sup>234</sup> 1.51.2.

<sup>235</sup> 1.52.3-1.52.7.

The concern for differentiating the opponents by racial character is evident since ethnic detail is included to emphasise the differences.<sup>236</sup> The Germanic response to the Roman charge is not only that they form a *phalanx*, but also that this is done *ex consuetudine sua*.<sup>237</sup> Caesar also includes weapons that distinguish the Romans, specifically mentioning that *pila* are dropped prior to combat.<sup>238</sup> In the confrontation and the description of intense close combat, Caesar is concerned to include details that clearly distinguish the protagonists from each other.

The description of the battle itself resolves the issue the reputation of the enemy, by demonstrating the superiority of the Romans in hand to hand combat. The narrative is particularly focused on this contrast of attributes, and details are provided to make the thematic resolution memorable.<sup>239</sup> Repetition in the passage is used to establish the idea that this is a particularly intense form of combat in which the issue of *virtus* is likely to be important.<sup>240</sup> Caesar repeats himself in close proximity regarding the use of swords when he states: *relictis pilis comminus gladiis pugnatum est. at Germani celeriter ex consuetudine sua phalange facta impetus gladiatorum exceperunt*.<sup>241</sup> He describes the dropping of *pila*, uses the word *comminus*, and the ablative of instrument for swords to vividly describe the actions of the men.<sup>242</sup> Nevertheless, he states again, in the very next sentence, that the *impetus gladiatorum* was held up by the enemy.<sup>243</sup> The repetition intensifies the vividness of the fighting through elaboration that could simply have been summarised through the use of *acriter*, a term used elsewhere to summarise fierce combat.<sup>244</sup> The elaboration shows how important it is to create the impression of an intensely fought close encounter between the sides.

<sup>236</sup> See also the Britons discussed below at pp. 247-250, and the Helvetii at pp. 170-174.

<sup>237</sup> See also pp. 174-175 below on the use of the word *phalanx*. While this may indicate the Germani are good at forming up in this way, Caesar does not clarify this in the battle. Like the Helvetian *phalanx* at 1.24.5.2, it helps to distinguish the sides.

<sup>238</sup> On *pila* use see Matthews (2010) p. 72. See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 185-197. Note that Gerlinger is not convinced of the realism of this passage.

<sup>239</sup> This is also the case with the *pila* volley against the Helvetii discussed at pp. 170-174.

<sup>240</sup> The absence of Germanic cavalry or other details might be designed to create this effect. Pelling (1981) p. 742 also notes that the terrain is given a “very simplified model”. See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 162-163 on manliness and *celeritas* in this encounter.

<sup>241</sup> 1.52.4-1.52.5. Note also the other instance of repetition in this battle discussed at p. 63 above. See also 7.88 where at the climax of the battle the men are described as dropping *pila* to fight with swords.

<sup>242</sup> 1.52.4. See Webb (2012) p.p. 12-15 on vividness.

<sup>243</sup> 1.52.4-1.52.5.

<sup>244</sup> See the Helvetii battle and use of *acriter* in a summary capacity at 1.25.6-1.25.7.

Having established the conditions for thematic resolution, the narrative focuses on exemplary actions of bravery that answer any preconception that the Germani are to be feared. While the enemy are pressing on the right wing, Caesar makes it clear that this is due to greater numbers, so that the superiority of Roman *virtus* is not undermined by the setback that occurs on one part of the battlefield.<sup>245</sup> Combat is instead given meaning by the description of men grabbing shields and pulling them down to get at the enemy, so that individuals perform courageous, almost self-sacrificial acts that bear a striking resemblance to a republican ideal, the *devotio*.<sup>246</sup> They also demonstrate through their actions that the greater size of the Germani is inconsequential in combat, as it is specifically the Romans who strike from above.<sup>247</sup> While this detail may only apply to some men, it serves as a universal anecdote that captures the savagery of the combat and the superior ferocity of the Romans. Caesar creates a generalisation, answering the perceived reputation of the enemy with a narrative built around acts of exemplary Roman courage.

The link between these feats of bravery and the results of combat are vague; as they are primarily provided to illustrate the ferocity of the Romans. As Caesar states, these men could be found on the battlefield, but he is unclear about what effect they have on the outcome.<sup>248</sup> While men probably did do this in the historical battle, it is not defined whether they did so on the victorious left, the struggling right or across the whole front. What matters is that men were willing to do this, and the simple fact they were there. Caesar's use of Latin, particularly the generic subjunctive, is crucial here.<sup>249</sup> Its use supports the idea he is thinking of character, and the kind of men who perform brave deeds. This section of the battle is thus conceptualised as an aspect of Roman *virtus*, and to convey the idea that when matched man to man, the Romans are better than their Germani counterparts. Contextual issues, such as where these men

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<sup>245</sup> A similar technique might be noted in the Helvetii battle, where Caesar specifies that the Boii and Tulingi appear on the flank with 15,000 men, possibly to show the superiority of the Romans, as they are able to counter their arrival easily. See 1.25. Note while this thesis uses the word wing, Caesar's word is actually *cornus*.

<sup>246</sup> See Livy 8.9.12-8.9.14 on the *devotio*. Feldherr (1998) pp. 92-93 discusses the characteristics of the *devotio* further.

<sup>247</sup> 1.52.6. On size, see the mockery of the Aduatuci discussed below at pp. 186-187.

<sup>248</sup> 1.52.5.

<sup>249</sup> 1.52.5-1.52.6. The use of the generic subjunctives in *insilirent et scuta manibus revellerent et desuper vulnerarent* are important in establishing the general qualities.

appeared and whether they affected the course of the battle, are less important than developing the idea of Roman character in the narrative.

The literary objective is most evident as the passage on close combat occurs in spite of the battle being decided by other criteria. The actions of the Roman commander, Publius Crassus, are instrumental in bringing about victory:

Cum hostium acies a sinistro cornu pulsa atque in fugam coniecta esset, a dextro cornu vehementer multitudine suorum nostram aciem premebant. id cum animadvertisset P. Crassus adulescens qui equitatus praeerat, quod expeditior erat quam ii, qui inter aciem versabantur, tertiam aciem laborantibus nostris subsidio misit.<sup>250</sup>

Clever thinking and observation support the wavering line in battle, not *virtus*.<sup>251</sup> Importantly, this is the first mention of Crassus and the cavalry, illustrating that the units only appear when necessary to explain this particular action.<sup>252</sup> This lack of context for the actions of Crassus are themselves indicative of the overall literary purpose of the battle, since in spite of their importance, Caesar is more focused on integrating the issue of *virtus* and its resolution in order to address the objective of the passage.

Furthermore, the final stages of the account suggest a concern to resolve the initial reputation, as evidenced by the anecdotal information provided in the pursuit.<sup>253</sup> Details are provided in the enemy rout that show how utterly Ariovistus has been

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<sup>250</sup> 1.52.6-1.52.7.

<sup>251</sup> This is also the case for Labienus in the Sabis River narrative discussed at pp. 237-238 below. On subordinates, see Welch (1998) p. 89. As Welch notes Caesar is balancing direct self-promotion with recognition of his subordinates. In this regard, the passage is not designed to marginalise Crassus directly, but to credit him within the broader narrative pattern. Note Caesar also establishes a thematic link between himself and the resolution of *virtus*, addressed below at pp. 220-221. On Crassus see also pp. 205-207.

<sup>252</sup> Note how Crassus is not mentioned at the start of battle, as the context is of *virtus* and the commanders as witnesses.

<sup>253</sup> Other anecdotes are discussed above at p. 116-123. See also the anecdotes of the Helvetii fighting among their wagons at 1.26 to illustrate their characteristics, discussed below at pp. 175-176 and the multitude of the Belgae, whose size is indicated by smoke fires discussed above at p. 74.

reduced in this battle and how inconsequential his boast ultimately was.<sup>254</sup> As Caesar states at the end:

Duae fuerunt Ariovisti uxores, una Sueba natione, quam domo secum duxerat, altera Norica regis Vocconis soror, quam in Gallia duxerat a fratre missam: utraque in ea fuga periit; duae filiae: harum altera occisa, altera capta est. C. Valerius Proculus, cum a custodibus in fuga trinis catenis vinctus traheretur, in ipsum Caesarem hostes equitatu persequentem incidit. quae quidem res Caesari non minorem quam ipsa victoria voluptatem attulit, quod hominem honestissimum provinciae Galliae, suum familiarem et hospitem, ereptum ex manibus hostium sibi restitutum videbat neque eius calamitate de tanta voluptate et gratulatione quicquam fortuna deminuerat. is se praesente de se ter sortibus consultum dicebat, utrum igni statim necaretur an in aliud tempus reservaretur; sortium beneficio se esse incolumem. item M. Metius repertus et ad eum reductus est.<sup>255</sup>

This passage elaborates on the pursuit with some incidents that appear of personal interest, such as the capture or killing of notable enemies and the recovery of captives.<sup>256</sup> While these stories do have interest of themselves, they also serve to highlight the complete and utter defeat of the enemy leader and his plans, the extent of his reduction evident in the later statement: *Ariovistus...naviculam deligatam ad ripam nactus ea profugit*.<sup>257</sup> The elaborations of such details suggest that Caesar at least in part is demonstrating how utterly Ariovistus has been defeated and how far his boasts and ambitions are from the final result.

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<sup>254</sup> For the reversal of enemy plans see Octodurus discussed above at pp. 101-102. On the reversal of circumstance initially favourable to the enemy see Erickson (2002) p. 612. Note how Crassus is not mentioned in pursuit, even though he was in charge of the cavalry. The flight to the Rhine is described, the objective of which is similar to 4.14-4.15 noted at p. 305 below. For problems regarding the distance between the battlefield and the Rhine see Ewan (2009) p. 107.

<sup>255</sup> 1.53.4-1.53.8.

<sup>256</sup> See Melchior (2004) p. 41. Melchior regards the issue of casualties and prisoner recovery in the battle as there to offset the escape of Ariovistus, by the showing loss of his family.

<sup>257</sup> 1.53.3. Kraus (2009) p. 171 notes that the escape of Ariovistus by little boat “miniaturises this great German”. He dies at least by 5.29.3. Also note at the conclusion of the Helvetian battle at 1.26. Caesar stated that when the baggage and camp were taken, the daughter of Orgetorix and one of his sons were captured, which on its own might suggest that Caesar was including these people as war booty, and their value in the narrative comes from their political value. It is interesting to note the inclusion of such details in the two major battles of Chapter One, with less precision regarding booty as the work progresses. Also note that Proculus the legate of Caesar appears at 1.19.3 and 1.47.4. See also Vercingetorix, who is marginalised in the Alesia narrative as discussed below at pp. 275-276.

The thematic importance of the pursuit is evident since the rescue of two legates captured earlier may also have been included to show that Ariovistus and his army are in the end of little consequence.<sup>258</sup> Caesar makes the rescue a central feature of the final assessment, and even states that it gives him as much pleasure as the victory.<sup>259</sup> The greatest emotion in the narrative is reserved for this anecdote, Caesar using particularly strong language to convey his joy, through the use of words such as *voluptas* and *gratulatio*.<sup>260</sup> He even calls the potential loss of one of these captives a *calamitas*, the word being particularly strong as it is usually reserved for disasters of greater significance that affect the state.<sup>261</sup> He summarises a conversation between himself and Gaius Valerius Procillus, so that the narrative shifts from the events unfolding around them as the enemy are run down, to this incident of personal interest.<sup>262</sup> The passage displays an interest in elements that are less related to military victory, which in the end is revealed to be a matter of little consequence. Such a focus illustrates how idle the words of Ariovistus were, how empty the idea that the Germani were ever a force to be reckoned with, and that Caesar was correct to dismiss any fears in the face of this enemy.

In this chapter it has been demonstrated that persuasion rather than reconstruction guides the narration of battle, and that there are a variety of ways in which Caesar uses battle narrative to support his interpretation or presentation of affairs. Battle can directly address a stated interpretation, as illustrated in the defeat of the Tigurini. An argument or contention can also be implicitly supported by details such as *exempla*, combat anecdotes and other details, as shown in the narration of Gergovia or the second invasion of Britain. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the campaign against the Venetii, battle descriptions look to the surrounding text for their context and meaning. In the case of the Venetii, the battle addresses and resolves the issues faced in the overall campaign, and is highly selective in this regard. As seen in the battle against

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<sup>258</sup> On the enemy flight to the Rhine see Seager (2003) pp. 30-34.

<sup>259</sup> Martin Jr. (1965) p. 65 notes the positive representation of C Valerius Procillus.

<sup>260</sup> 1.53.6.

<sup>261</sup> 1.53.6. See 1.12.6, 1.13.7, 1.31.6, 2.14.4, 7.77.4, 7.90.6, for examples of *calamitas* affecting the state in the *Bellum Gallicum*. Note that the term is often used in relation to a major disaster, such as a famine or a defeat, see Cato *Agr*, 141.2, Pliny *Nat* 14.125, Cicero *Phil* 5.43, Livy 3.31.6, but there is evidence for the personal effect i.e. Livy 2.22.7, 28.43.12.

<sup>262</sup> This is also evident in the embellishment Caesar provides. Caesar gives additional information to emphasise the plight of Gaius and the humiliation he suffered, by relating that three chains that bound him at 1.53.5. This extra detail is clearly intended to engage the audience and is an unnecessary addition if Caesar were only interested in relating the fact of the rescue.



Ariovistus, the persuasive aim of the battle is to answer and resolve the overall campaign narrative, and the question of the Germani reputation. It is an argument that would appeal to a Roman audience, but persuasive nonetheless as it portrays Caesar's superior knowledge of warfare and the enemy. Information is provided, *exempla* are used, and combat is described in order to reinforce this concept, as battle narrative is inextricably linked to Caesar's interpretative schema. This understanding of battle is inherent to the rest of this study, which examines how battle narrative is formulated to generate impressions related to those involved in the passages, whether these are the forces and peoples encountered, or the person of Caesar himself.

### CHAPTER 3: CAESAR'S CHARACTERS AND BATTLE

As demonstrated in Chapter Two, Caesar uses the content of battle for the persuasion of his audience, through details that implicitly support his interpretation of an episode. However he does not just use the content to support his understanding of the event itself, and in this chapter, case studies are used to show that Caesar specifically utilises battle to establish characteristics, or to support his interpretation of the characters described in the text.<sup>1</sup> This is not simply the result of their presence as historical figures, as through battle the narrator defines the nature of his enemies or encourages a particular impression of their behaviour. Kraus notes that Caesar draws on, but does not “slavishly” follow established preconceptions regarding his characters.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore important to examine the narratives as there is a difference between a purely descriptive account of enemies faced or general ethnic representation, and Caesar’s portrayal of battle, which utilises contextual information, or descriptions of combat to define the characters in particular ways. Caesar creates the characters that best suit the circumstances under which he narrates each section of the work.<sup>3</sup> For example, battle can be used in an introductory manner, such as in the Bibracte narrative, which is constructed to establish the behaviour of Gauls for the audience.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the topos of the Belgic multitude examined in Chapter One has a more important objective than to simply describe the odds against Caesar, as the topos is given unmartial and disruptive characteristics through the context of the battle narrative. In the siege of Aduatuca, the physical environment of the siege is used in conjunction with the attitudes of the defenders to show their arrogance, perfidy and general aggression.<sup>5</sup> However the use of battle to define characteristics is no more evident than in the Sabis River account, where the Nervii are defined by their *virtus* in order to create a worthy enemy for Caesar, even though the attribute is

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<sup>1</sup> See in general Jervis (2001); Riggsby (2006) pp. 48-53; Rawlings (1998); Schadee (2008); Heubner (1974); Gerlinger (2008) pp. 235-243. See Welch (1998) and Powell (1998) on officers.

<sup>2</sup> Kraus (2009) pp. 165-166. On general ethnography see Wells (2001).

<sup>3</sup> See Jervis (2001); Riggsby (2006) pp. 48-71 and Rawlings (1998). To a certain extent, the previous case studies have addressed this objective, as the topos of the Belgic multitude is a stylistic portrayal of an enemy, and the defeat of Ariovistus’ claims addresses the reputation of the Germani as a people. See pp. 71-88, 146-161 above.

<sup>4</sup> 1.24-1.26.

<sup>5</sup> 2.1-2.12, 2.29-2.33. Gardner (1983) p. 184 notes that Caesar “repeatedly” uses character as justification for military action.

highly problematic in explaining the course and result of the battle.<sup>6</sup> Caesar also uses the details of battle to assign credit or blame to individuals, even if it is simply to praise subordinates such as Crassus and Labienus. The military circumstances can even be used in order to assign responsibility, as is the case with the failure of Sabinus.<sup>7</sup> While the individual objectives may vary, the consistent role of battle narrative and the details provided is to imbue the forces and individuals with characteristics that establish or support Caesar's interpretation of them for his audience.

### **Establishing Characteristics through Battle**

At a fundamental level, Caesar utilises battle to capture the essential characteristics of the protagonists. Wells has noted overall patterns of representation regarding the enemy, and that Caesar separates Gauls and Germani in the interests of defining his field of conquest.<sup>8</sup> Such defining of enemy characteristics is evident in battle as the confrontation of Romans and their enemies, where the differences between them are established by the details of combat. Sometimes the passage calls for a simple ethnic dichotomy, such as the use of *pila* volleys in Book Six and the Bibracte narrative to answer the confidence of the enemy with a distinctly Roman response.<sup>9</sup> Details provided also distinguish the opponents, such as the description of *gaesa* and *lapides* hurled by the Gauls in the Octodurus narrative, which is enough to determine that the

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<sup>6</sup> See Jervis (2001) p. 52.

<sup>7</sup> See generally Powell (1998). See also Kraus (2009) p. 167 on Labienus and Sabinus. On Crassus see Welch (1998) pp. 92-93. Note that other individuals, such as Vercingetorix and Ariovistus, are addressed in their relevant case studies.

<sup>8</sup> Wells (2001) pp. 112-113. Wells states that Caesar views people as culturally static, and that his representation suggests that was how the landscape always was. However Wells cites the growth of *oppida* as an example of change that refutes Caesar's presentation. Similarly Wells states that certain groups such as the Belgae may have come about through interaction with Roman world and how they then identified themselves. As Wells notes at p. 116 if Caesar can distinguish Gauls and Germani with the Rhine as a boundary he can claim to have completed the conquest of a people.

<sup>9</sup> On the *pilum* see 6.8 in general and 6.8.6 for the *pila* volley. Also 1.25 for the Bibracte narrative and 1.23.3 for the implication of Helvetian confidence. Also see 1.13.4. For other uses of the *pilum* see 1.52.4, 2.27.5 and 7.88.3. All appear at important parts of their respective battle narratives. At 1.52 the resolution of the Germanic reputation is addressed, and at 2.27 the *virtus* of the Nervii is addressed. At 7.88 the battle of Alesia is resolved. There are few other uses at 2.23, 5.44, and 7.62. At 5.44.6 the *exempla* of Titus Pullo and Lucius Vorenus appear. See also 7.15. Note how the enemy is confident of victory again, something Caesar rarely shows of himself. See Riggsby (2006) p. 49 on boastfulness.

Gauls are foreign, barbaric and primitive.<sup>10</sup> Such an objective may also be evident in terrain in the battle of Octodurus. The fortifications of the Roman camp are described only generally, so that they could easily be those of a standard Roman camp, with *fossa*, and *vallum* along a standard four sides, thereby identifying the Roman nature of the defenders.<sup>11</sup> The information, while limited regarding the circumstances of battle, establishes the basic theme of Roman against barbarian aggressor, thereby capturing the essential nature of the participants.

The Octodurus narrative also illustrates how Caesar simplifies information in order to create impressions regarding the characteristics of the enemy, and combat is reduced to terms of enemy national character. Caesar does not describe Gallic numbers at the start of the account, but features of the barbaric are inherent in the Gauls' superior numbers, represented by the use of *multitudo*, a term used effectively in the previous book to define the Belgae.<sup>12</sup> The generic description of the enemy attack as *ex omnibus partibus*, and the implication in *neque ullum frustra telum ex loco superiore mittere*, that there are so many of them they are impossible to miss, both capture this fundamental characteristic.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore the absence of details regarding the Gallic attack aids this interpretation, as the implication is that overwhelming force is the preferred tactic, a simplistic strategy that nonetheless suits a partisan account of ethnic character. The limited details provided assist in establishing the details of the enemy and the nature of fighting against them.

Battle does not just establish fundamental characteristics, and Caesar provides information in order to invite a more direct assessment of the forces described. In the siege of Quintus Cicero in Book Six, Caesar breaks up combat based on his criticism that some Roman units failed to behave correctly in combat when attacked while

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<sup>10</sup> 3.4.1-3.4.2. This is the case elsewhere in the work where Caesar gives little specific detail of Gallic forces to identify them, relying on broader ethnic characteristics to describe them, such as in the Helvetii battle where the *pila* identifies the Romans against unprotected Gauls at 1.25.2. See also the Belgae battle for assaults and the use of stones. 2.6.2-2.6.3. Riggsby (2006) pp. 101-105 regards the work as showing a development of technology among the Gauls.

<sup>11</sup> See 3.1.6 where only *vallum* and *fossa* are mentioned. Without a comprehensive defensive layout, it is possible that Caesar encourages the visualisation of the defence as typically Roman. Note how complex the fortifications must have been, as Caesar states that there was a town with even a river in the middle at 3.1.6.

<sup>12</sup> See 3.2.1. On the topos of the enemy multitude see above pp. 71-88.

<sup>13</sup> See 3.4.1-3.4.2.

foraging.<sup>14</sup> These units are therefore described to address the issue of correct behaviour, with details included to deliberately invite the various possible results that their varied experience might bring about.<sup>15</sup> This is apparent in his description of the men foraging, whether they are *calones*, new recruits or experienced soldiers.<sup>16</sup> Their differing responses to an attack by the enemy contrast various responses, whether it is open flight, panic induced inactivity, or the determined actions of the experienced soldiers.<sup>17</sup> Caesar even describes the actions of the individual Baculus, an *exemplum* who through extraordinary courage and adherence to discipline leaves his sickbed and helps restore the situation.<sup>18</sup> Baculus provides a clear exemplar of behaviour that contrasts with the circumstances of the surprise attack, in order to demonstrate the correct response to such a situation, and the manner by which such matters are restored. Contrasts of behaviour are used to explain events, or to contextualise the response, indicating that battle is used to assess and rate the performance of the participants.

Battle is also used to draw other contrasts in behaviour between the Romans and the enemy.<sup>19</sup> Caesar makes a statement that illustrates this objective in the siege of Avaricum:

Singulari militum nostrorum virtuti consilia cuiusque modi Gallorum occurrebant, ut est summae genus sollertiae atque ad omnia imitanda et efficienda, quae a quoque traduntur, aptissimum.<sup>20</sup>

As is apparent in this passage, Roman *virtus* is in direct opposition to the ability of the Gauls to imitate and adapt, which provides a context for understanding how the battle is portrayed.<sup>21</sup> The description of their measures against the Romans, such as

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<sup>14</sup> See 6.36-6.37.

<sup>15</sup> 6.39-6.40. Note also there is criticism of Quintus Cicero in this account, for not obeying Caesar's commands. See 6.42.1-6.42.2.

<sup>16</sup> 6.36.2-6.36.3.

<sup>17</sup> See 6.39-6.40. See 6.40.4 for the correct response by the veterans: *hoc veteres non probant milites*.

<sup>18</sup> 6.38.1-6.38.5.

<sup>19</sup> See also Octodurus noted above p. 164, and the Helvetii noted below at pp. 171-175.

<sup>20</sup> 7.22.1-7.22.2.

<sup>21</sup> Riggsby (2006) p. 98. Riggsby regards the representation of the Gauls at Avaricum to be designed to make them parallel Roman *virtus*. Kraus (2010) p. 45 notes of Avaricum the contrast of Caesar's practicality against the tendency of the Gauls to "adornment" and "overdone rhetoric". See also Kraus (2010) p. 48 for the direct contrast of Gauls and Romans, and the idea of the Gauls as imitative

the use of hooks, mines and fortifications are associated with general characteristics of the Gauls.<sup>22</sup> This contrast is particularly illustrated by the lack of a temporal structure to the measures taken, which are merely listed rather than described as a progression of activity.<sup>23</sup> The lack of such context illustrates that combat is constructed as a contrast of behaviours, where the combatants are described in order to represent their different qualities.

A significant amount of military detail is included in the campaign narratives to define the enemy, and campaign and battle work in conjunction to ascribe characteristics to them. This is evident in the Nervii campaign, where contextual information is presented to portray the enemy as fundamentally aggressive. Prior to the Sabis River battle Caesar states that the Nervii do not receive *mercatores* within their borders.<sup>24</sup> The implication of this is that they act outside normal trade relations and discourse.<sup>25</sup> This in turn implies that they are fundamentally aggressive, possibly even relying on raiding instead of trade.<sup>26</sup> The progress of the campaign supports this as the Nervii focus their strategy around the location of a baggage train, hide in the woods, and even head straight for the Roman camp when battle commences.<sup>27</sup> While it is not explicitly stated that the Nervii are raiders, the presentation is consistent with the overall implication that they are belligerent in nature.<sup>28</sup> The passage is therefore instrumental in contextualising the character of the enemy for the audience, and is part of an overall literary construct regarding the representation of the enemy.

The use of information to capture the nature of the enemy is also apparent in the fortifications in Britain, which explain the landscape of battle, but are also included in

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of Roman techniques. See also Caesar's tribute to the Gauls at the Sabis River, discussed at pp. 192-204 below.

<sup>22</sup> 7.22.

<sup>23</sup> 7.22. Note the measures are simply listed. Contrast this to the overall linear temporality of the books. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 154-155. See a similar approach in the Venetii account of Caesar's own activity pp. 130-131 above. See also Levick (1998) p. 64.

<sup>24</sup> 2.15.4.-2.15.5.

<sup>25</sup> See Jervis (2001) p. 63-75, Torigian (1998) pp. 49-50 for different objectives attributes to this representation.

<sup>26</sup> Such aggression is evident in several accounts where Caesar is on the offensive, such as the siege of Avaricum discussed at pp. 291-297, and Aduatuca discussed at pp. 184-192 below.

<sup>27</sup> See 2.17.2-2.17.4 for the strategy, 2.19.6 for use of *abditii*. See 2.23.4-2.23.5 for the movement to the baggage at the start of battle.

<sup>28</sup> This is at odds with the circumstances, as they are actually in defence of their homeland, the stated objective of the Belgae overall at 2.10.4.

order to address the belligerence of the enemy.<sup>29</sup> Caesar mentions a battle fought at a stronghold in woods, where he makes it clear that the Britons fortify natural places due to their warlike propensity.<sup>30</sup> He further demonstrates this purpose in battle when he states of the stronghold of Cassivellaunus: *oppidum autem Britanni vocant, cum silvas impeditas vallo atque fossa munierunt, quo incursionis hostium vitandae causa convenire consuerunt.*<sup>31</sup> This explanation of terminology shows that Caesar has as much concern for the nature of the enemy as the conditions of battle. Importantly, the defences play no further role in the description of the Roman attack, suggesting the purpose is primarily to explain this aspect of their nature.<sup>32</sup> In this case, apparent contextual details play little role in the narrative of battle as they are primarily designed to establish the broader representation of the enemy and their customs.

Information included to define enemy characteristics can come at the expense of the historical circumstances of battle, as is apparent in the Germanic battle in Book One, where details are included in order to highlight the barbaric nature of the enemy. This information is discordant with an understanding of battle, as Caesar describes the Germanic custom of casting lots, but only provides the practice, without reference to the actual circumstances of battle.<sup>33</sup> As he states:

Cum ex captivis quaereret Caesar, quam ob rem Ariovistus proelio non decertaret, hanc reperiēbat causam, quod apud Germanos ea consuetudo esset, ut matres familiae eorum sortibus vaticinationibusque declararent, utrum proelium committi ex usu esset necne; eas ita dicere: non esse fas Germanos superare, si ante novam lunam proelio contendissent.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See Jervis (2001) p. 141. Jervis states that Caesar stresses the primitiveness of Gauls as part of his self-promotion. See below pp. 182-183 on the primitive siege techniques of the Belgae. Riggsby examines the idea of primitiveness at pp. 73-83.

<sup>30</sup> 5.9.4-5.9.5. See also 5.12.2 where he mentions that the Maritime tribes were invaders seeking booty. There is an emphasis on internal divisions that while not the focus of this thesis, is evidence of his objective of representing the enemy. See also the hedges of the Nervii at 2.17.4-2.17.5 discussed by Brown (1999) p. 334 and the history the Aduatuci at 2.29.4-2.29.5.

<sup>31</sup> 5.21.3-5.21.4.

<sup>32</sup> 5.21.4-5.21.6. See also the fortifications of Octodurus discussed above at p. 100.

<sup>33</sup> Mannetter (1995) pp. 125-126 regards the casting of lots as foreshadowing the Roman victory, which is possible, but would take away from the impact of combat as the resolution to that episode, discussed at pp. 155-160 above.

<sup>34</sup> 1.50.4-1.50.5.

The Germani would not fight until the new moon for religious reasons, however it is not stated when the new moon occurred, and the audience must assume it had not yet happened.<sup>35</sup> Due to the absence of exact dates in the *Bellum Gallicum*, the information provides insight into the practices of the enemy but with only an implied association with the battle.<sup>36</sup> As an explanation for the course of events the practice is only illustrative of the nature of the enemy and not fully integrated with the rest of the narrative.

The problematic nature of such a focus is evident as the practice also does not explain why the Germani engage in battle. A major engagement occurs before the final battle, one that is long and fought *acriter* according to the narrative, and which involves significant numbers of men, and the enemy come out of camp to fight it in spite of the auspices noted above.<sup>37</sup> The *necessitas* that drives them to leave their camp for the final battle is also unclear, particularly as the matrons have warned against battle.<sup>38</sup> Even Caesar's own behaviour is not fully explained, and it is left for the audience to infer that he leads his forces out because he knows the Germani are reluctant to fight.<sup>39</sup> Information is brought within the framework of the battle narrative to illustrate the barbaric nature of the enemy, and only inferences can be made about the course of battle, as it is not the purpose of the inclusion.

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<sup>35</sup> Note that the Germani have actually already fought a battle at 1.50.3-1.50.4. Caesar's lack of clarification in regards to the earlier combat indicates that this is not the purpose of the passage, and that it is more likely directed at the interest of such a practice. The casting of lots is also mentioned in regards to a prisoner taken by the Germani at 1.53.7, and is another example of details included for their representation of the enemy. Caesar's choice of background elaboration suggests that the narrative is structured around this objective, as M. Metius, the other captive, is barely mentioned at 1.53.8.

<sup>36</sup> Richter (1977) p. 95.

<sup>37</sup> 1.50.1-1.50.5, 1.51.2-1.51.3.

<sup>38</sup> The reference to *necessitas* at 1.51.2 may however be in regards to the idea the Germani come out for battle in spite of the auspices. Melchior (2004) p. 40, notes that Caesar attacks Ariovistus before new moon, not giving his own reasoning but we can assume to take advantage of the superstition. In fact, as is demonstrated elsewhere in the *Bellum Gallicum*, defending the wagons could actually place the Germani in a stronger position, so that the religious anecdote is alone insufficient to fully explain the behaviour of the Germani. See 1.26.1-1.26.4, 4.14.4-4.14.5 for examples where the enemy are able to resist among the wagons. In particular, the difficulty in rooting out opposition in the Helvetii battle is a feature of 1.26.

<sup>39</sup> Frontinus *Strategmata* 2.1.16 regards Caesar as utilising the stratagem against the enemy. However if this is the case, Caesar does not explain why he allowed the Germani to form up before the battle. As he states, the Romans were right up near the camp, but allows the Germani to array themselves by tribe, form a shield wall and their women even set up on wagons. Contrast this behaviour to the Usipetes and Tencteri account at 4.14.4-4.14.5 where no opportunity is given. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 161.



Similarly, in the description of a campaign against Labienus in Book Five, no information is provided on the military strength of the enemy, in contrast to extensive details that capture the nature of Gallic resistance.<sup>40</sup> Information is given on Gallic embassies, their meetings and plans, even where these are unsuccessful, since the emphasis is on conspiratorial activity, rather than the success of the missions.<sup>41</sup> Caesar even includes the statement: *quo lege communi omnes puberes armati convenire coguntur; qui ex iis novissimus venit, in conspectu multitudinis omnibus cruciatibus adfectus necatur*.<sup>42</sup> This anecdote that the Gauls put to death the last one to arrive at the convention is indicative of the need to represent enemy customs and behaviour.<sup>43</sup> This statement is a comment on the general nature of the Gauls, and contextualises the information as part of this observation.<sup>44</sup> The details included are heavily influenced by the attribution of characteristics to the enemy, even when the actions are unsuccessful or anecdotal.

Caesar also introduces indirect speech into battle to illustrate behaviour. While scholarship pays close attention to speeches that capture the characteristics of individuals like Ariovistus or Critognatus, the words attributed to groups are just as important for their representation of the peoples involved.<sup>45</sup> This is evident in the siege of Aduatuca, where speech is used to form a generic attitude for the defenders.<sup>46</sup> The Aduatuci speak as a group in ridiculing the size of the Romans, asking rhetorical questions about their attempts to besiege the town.<sup>47</sup> The specific nature of the taunts suggests that the general chaotic abuse of the battlefield has been directed into a comment on the overconfidence of the defenders and an insight into their character.<sup>48</sup> This is an example of the catcalls and abuse of battle directing attention to an understanding of the enemy.

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<sup>40</sup> 5.56. Note lack of numbers regarding the army of Indutiomarus.

<sup>41</sup> 5.53.4-5.53.5. See 5.55.2 for unsuccessful embassies to the Germani. See also 5.54.5.

<sup>42</sup> 5.56.2-5.56.3.

<sup>43</sup> On representation in general, see Riggsby (2006) pp. 47-53 on the tradition.

<sup>44</sup> See 5.53-5.54. The observation lends meaning to the activity, illustrating how it is not just a descriptive passage about campaign activity.

<sup>45</sup> Note that a full examination of speech in the *Bellum Gallicum* is not the objective of this thesis. See Nordling (1991) pp. 100-112 for a general study on discourse.

<sup>46</sup> See pp. 186-187 below where this is discussed of 2.30.3. Even when the speakers are identified as *legati*, they speak with one voice so that the words they use are still attributes of the Aduatuci. See also 1.13.3-1.13.5 where the Helvetii speak as one as well. See also *Bellum Civile* 1.35.3 where the legates of Massilia speak as one.

<sup>47</sup> 2.30.3-2.30.4.

<sup>48</sup> See Nordling (1991) pp. 144-152 generally.

Furthermore, through enemy motivation for battle, Caesar is able to capture significant details regarding their nature. In the Octodurus narrative, he is clearly capturing the anger of the Gauls as he states their family members are taken *obsidum nomine*, the use of *nomine* evoking the idea of pretence and injustice.<sup>49</sup> Fear regarding Roman plans, and resentment for family members taken as hostages is quite clear in the use of *dolebant*.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, contempt for the Romans is illustrated in the use of *despiciebant*, to describe the Gallic attitude to the paucity of defenders, the word also serving to imply confidence in Gallic numbers.<sup>51</sup> The complexity of emotions and motivation ascribed for this battle is evidence of how thoroughly Caesar addresses the thought processes of the enemy. As with the other narratives addressed in this section, it is clear that battle plays an important role in assigning characteristics to the Romans and their enemies. This is so, even when such information is not required for the battle, or comes at the expense of clarity regarding the course of military affairs.

## Defining the Gauls

Battle serves an important role in the definition of behaviour, particularly as it is through battle narrative that Caesar often records the details of the people he encountered.<sup>52</sup> The objective of defining the nature of the enemy is noticeable in many accounts, such as the first encounters with the Germani and Britons, where their ways of fighting are introduced through the course of the battle narrative.<sup>53</sup> It is also evident in the introduction of the Nervii and Belgae in Book Two, where their customs are expressed through the sequences of rumour and intelligence that contextualise the battle.<sup>54</sup> However battle is not just descriptive in regards to enemy characteristics, and is used to create impressions about the enemy and the nature of war against them. This need to define the participants is evident in the first major

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<sup>49</sup> 3.2.5. This interpretation of *nomine* seems possible since the passage is focused through the Gauls. See Görler (1976) p. 113.

<sup>50</sup> 3.2.5.

<sup>51</sup> 3.2.4. As Caesar states, they fill up the hills around the camp at 3.2.1.

<sup>52</sup> Schadee (2008) p. 159 notes a campaign oriented representation.

<sup>53</sup> For the Germani and Britons see 1.48.5-1.48.7, 4.24.3-4.24.4. See also 4.2, 4.33 for further introductions to fighting techniques.

<sup>54</sup> 2.4, 2.15.

account of the *Bellum Gallicum*, the defeat of the Helvetii near Bibracte.<sup>55</sup> In this battle Caesar dispenses with his justification for the campaign outside of the battle narrative, explaining his actions against the Helvetii earlier in Book One.<sup>56</sup> The passage therefore functions in a general introductory role, by establishing enemy conduct for the audience, and illustrating certain contrasts of behaviour between Romans and Gauls.<sup>57</sup> Caesar also builds up his Gallic enemy in the account to create a worthy adversary, representing their courage and tenacity, indicating how the passage is determined by the need to establish for the audience the scope of the challenge faced in Gaul.<sup>58</sup> This introductory role is evident in the description of combat, in the manoeuvres before and during the battle, and in the manner Caesar concludes the account, all of which illustrate the structural role of this battle in identifying enemy characteristics for the audience.<sup>59</sup> The battle against the Helvetii has a particularly potent role in establishing an understanding of the enemy, due to its positioning as the first major battle narrative between Gauls and Romans.

As the first major battle narrative, the Bibracte account is fundamentally shaped by the introduction of the Gauls involved and details are included that emphasise the foreignness of this enemy. In order to capture the novelty of combat against this enemy, Caesar describes a *pila* volley with significant details.<sup>60</sup> The volley is described in this way:

Milites e loco superiore pilis missis facile hostium phalangem perfregerunt. ea disiecta gladiis dstrictis in eos impetum fecerunt. Gallis magno ad pugnam erat

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<sup>55</sup> 1.24-1.26.

<sup>56</sup> See 1.4-1.6.

<sup>57</sup> On the representation of the Gauls see Riggsby (2006) pp. 47-53. See also Jervis (2001) p. 78 who notes that Caesar refers to the Helvetii as strongest of Gauls and the battle proves his point. On the introduction of the Helvetian leadership see Barlow (1998) pp. 140-144. Rawlings (1998) discusses the Gauls as warriors in general. See also Kraus (2009) p. 165. Diodorus Siculus 5.28-5.29 notes that individuals issue challenges in front of lines and sing songs, however there is no sign of this in Caesar. See Strabo *Geog* 4.4.2 for the character of Gauls as simple but warlike. See also Walser (1995) p. 218 who notes the problems of the campaign in terms of *Tendenz*.

<sup>58</sup> Note that the Gauls do not always prove worthy opponents as the work progresses. See the Belgae discussed at pp. 177-184 below. See also Jervis (2001) p. 52.

<sup>59</sup> Collins (1972) pp. 927, 930 extends this argument and states that the length of the first is due to literary requirements rather than self-justification, and suggests the depth of Book One is purely literary as an introduction to the “whole Gallic scene”.

<sup>60</sup> See Mathews (2010) pp. 63-84 on the *pilum* in general. As noted at pp. 47-48 above, this is not actually the first battle, only the first extended battle narrative in the book. Note that there is little evidence of vengeance in the battle narrative, unlike the Tigurini which is contextualised so at 1.12 as noted above at pp. 113-116.

impedimento, quod pluribus eorum scutis uno ictu pilorum transfixis et colligatis, cum ferrum se inflexisset, neque evellere neque sinistra impedita satis commode pugnare poterant, multi ut diu iactato brachio praeoptarent scutum manu emittere et nudo corpore pugnare.<sup>61</sup>

Kagan views this *pila* throw as an example of simply adding colour to the narrative.<sup>62</sup> The passage is certainly distinctive, as Caesar explains in particular detail the effect of the Roman *pilum* on Gallic shields.<sup>63</sup> The language and syntax used emphasises the impact of the weapon, indicating that particular care has been given to make this passage distinct, something Williams has noted in his analysis.<sup>64</sup> Caesar never repeats this level of detail regarding the use of the *pilum*, and when it is mentioned, he does not include any details of how or why it worked.<sup>65</sup> This is so even when such detail might be appropriate to explain why the Romans are able to defeat their opponents, suggesting that the passage is determined by the place in the text.<sup>66</sup> As this is the first instance of detailed combat described between Roman and Gaul, and the level of detail is unique, it appears to be included for its introductory purpose in describing combat between adversaries.

There does not appear to be a technical need to describe the weapon in action in this particular battle. The details are not required to explain the course of combat for the audience and the narrative is not based on the requirement for technical elucidation. The *pilum* was a Roman weapon and its effect probably well known.<sup>67</sup> Unlike

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<sup>61</sup> 1.25.2-1.25.5.

<sup>62</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 115.

<sup>63</sup> Caesar picks the least effective aspect of the initial volley to describe in his account. As Matthews (2010) p. 69 notes there are four potential effects of a *pila* volley, from killing, wounding and breaking up the formation to impeding the enemy in their use of the shield. The last, while useful, is less deadly than actually killing or wounding, yet is the effect that Caesar focuses on, demonstrating his interest in the more striking and unique effect of the weapon.

<sup>64</sup> Williams (1985) p. 223. Williams regards the objective as to show the ease with which the Helvetians are driven back. This does not reconcile with the end of the narrative however, which stresses the difficulty of defeating the people.

<sup>65</sup> See 6.8.6.

<sup>66</sup> Caesar generally states that soldiers in a *loco superiore* (higher place) normally triumph over their opponents. See 1.25, 2.23, 3.4, 3.25, 5.9. 7.19-7.20 is the main instance where Caesar refuses to fight an enemy in a strong position, out of welfare for the men. For attacks from above as generally viewed as successful see also 3.4, 3.25, 4.23. Examples of not specifically missile are 2.23, 5.9, 6.40, 7.19, 7.62, 7.88. See also 2.23 for the Atrebatas, and at 7.62 where the first rank of the enemy is destroyed by missiles, and 7.88, 1.52, where *pila* are dropped at the climactic moment.

<sup>67</sup> See Zhmodikov (2000) p. 68, on Livy at 9.13.2-9.13.5, 9.35.4-9.35.6, and 28.2.5-28.2.6 describing the throwing of *pila* then advancing with swords.

descriptions of enemy tactics or equipment, or descriptions of siege and bridgeworks, a digression on the weapon is therefore unnecessary for technical reasons or audience elucidation.<sup>68</sup> Some of an aristocratic audience may even have been familiar with the *pilum* and its use in battle from personal experience.<sup>69</sup> It therefore appears unlikely the weapon requires particular introduction to the audience in order to familiarise them with its usage. Moreover the elaboration is a reflection of the general idea that men fighting *e loco superiore* have an advantage over those in an inferior position, all details that could have been summarised through the use of the verb *impedire* to describe the Gallic reaction.<sup>70</sup> It is also clear that not all the Gauls are affected, the word *pluribus* merely indicating a large number, not necessarily a large proportion of the enemy who may have numbered over 65,000.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, the enemy are actually put to flight in hand-to-hand combat, indicated by the use of *tandem* after the Romans close with swords, and while significant, the *pila* volley is only part of the reason for the enemy retreat.<sup>72</sup> The Gauls would presumably also be at this disadvantage throughout the entire battle, and casualties from missiles would be more effective later on if the volley had the effect that is described; however there is no such mention.<sup>73</sup> Consequently there does not appear to be any unusual significance in the use of *pila* in this particular narrative in determining the outcome of the battle. As the details are nevertheless included, this suggests a narrative, rather than a technical objective for the passage.

Given the passage's prominence at the start of the battle, these details establish Gallic characteristics in the face of a distinctly Roman technique.<sup>74</sup> The vast numbers of

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<sup>68</sup> See 2.6 on sieges, 3.13-14 Gallic boats, 4.17-18 on the Rhine Bridge. As Dodington (1980) pp. 1-7 argues these are not necessarily included in detail for technical elucidation.

<sup>69</sup> See Wiseman (1998) on publication, but note that the idea of general dissemination is rejected by Riggsby (2006) p. 13. Note that Bishop and Coulston (1993) p. 43 recognise that Caesar's description of the *pila* toss pinning multiple shields has the implication this did not normally occur.

<sup>70</sup> See the Atrebatas at 2.23 and others 1.12, 2.10, 3.19, 3.24. For 4.24, 4.26 see pp. 254-260 below on the landing in Britain. See also the description of Pullo at 5.44 for how Caesar separates the detail of combat and the use of *impedire*.

<sup>71</sup> See 1.29 for the numbers. This assumes the same proportion of fighting men in just the Helvetii as for the confederacy all together. It is unclear how many from the census were in the battle.

<sup>72</sup> 1.25.5-1.25.6. The *pilum* appears to function less effectively than where missiles alone change the outcome of an encounter, such as against the Atrebatas, whom Caesar says are driven off by missiles only, and only later killed by swords as they struggle in the water at 2.23.1-2.23.2. See also 7.62, 7.81.

<sup>73</sup> 1.25.5-1.26.4.

<sup>74</sup> Melchior (2004) p. 35 notes the dichotomy of Roman *pila* and the *matura/tragula* is an emphasis on foreignness. The emphasis on the enemy wagons at 1.26 is also indicative of their foreign nature.

Helvetii, who are recorded in later documents, are here found in the *confertissima acie* with which they face the opening volley of Roman *pila*.<sup>75</sup> The narrative also illustrates their behaviour in combat, and the *pilum* has a striking effect at this point, as individuals shake their arms, casting off the shields and fighting *nudo corpore*.<sup>76</sup> They do not just drop their shields, as Caesar is careful to state that they attempt to shake out the *pila* for a long time, suggestive of unfamiliarity with what happened to them.<sup>77</sup> More importantly, as opposed to the normal soldierly reaction of fear in response to an attack on their unshielded side, the Helvetii opt to fight unprotected; the choice of word *praeoptare* important is it indicates a preference for this unsoldierly, but courageous form of battle.<sup>78</sup> How far soldiers encumbered so had a choice in the matter is debatable, if, as Caesar states, their shields were pinned to others'. However this depiction casts them as impressive in battle, with an attention drawn to their physical form that is consistent with the emphasis on their body elsewhere in the sources.<sup>79</sup> The elaboration of detail in this early instance of combat serves to introduce the enemy by establishing their behaviour in combat against Roman adversaries.

Further introduction is evident as the enemy are described in terms that indicate their foreign way of fighting. The use of the word *phalanx* to describe the Gallic shield wall is not merely a technical description, as while this word serves functionally to describe the formation adopted, the word is only ever used again in Book One, in a description of the formation of the Germani.<sup>80</sup> Just as with the details of the *pila*, the

<sup>75</sup> 1.24.5. For this recurring aspect of the *Bellum Gallicum*, see the catalogue of the Belgae at 2.4 and Octodurus at p. 164 above. See also pp. 79-88.

<sup>76</sup> 1.25.4-1.25.5.

<sup>77</sup> See also landing in Britain discussed at pp. 249-250 where there is emphasis on the unfamiliarity of the Britons with Roman weapons and ships.

<sup>78</sup> 1.25.4. For fear of attacks on the unshielded side see 2.23, 2.25 4.25, 4.26, 5.35. Note that even Caesar at 2.25.2 first grabs a shield before nearing the front lines. See Jervis (2001) pp. 44-53. On Gauls see Diodorus Siculus 5.29.

<sup>79</sup> See Strabo *Geog* 4.4.2. See also Cicero *Prov Cons* 33.10 for *bellicosus*. Also Riggsby (2006) pp. 56-57 and See Jervis (2001) pp. 17-53 on their warlike nature and the tradition. See also Polybius 2.28 where they are willing to go into battle naked. On the physical form, see Jervis (2001) pp. 34-39, Livy 5.11, 7.10.7, 7.26.9, 22.46, Polybius 2.19. 3.114. However as Jervis notes at p. 45 the picture of Gauls is inconsistent, and they are also depicted as cowardly and easily defeated. See Polybius 2.19, Livy 7.26.9, 35.11. In regards to tenacity, the Gauls are represented as socially fickle at *BG* 4.5, and fierce in battle, if unable to endure hardship in the republican tradition. See Livy 5.48, 33.36, 35.5, Polybius 3.79.

<sup>80</sup> See 1.52.4. In both cases Caesar describes a Roman response that specifically targets the shields. In the Helvetian battle, the Romans break up the *phalanx* with *pila*, in the Germani battle it is the actions of Roman individuals leaping onto the enemy and grabbing their shields. It is important to

use of the word only in the first book suggests that, unless the audience is to believe that the Gauls and Germans never use this formation again, Caesar is including the word as an introduction to the techniques of the enemy in a manner his audience will understand.<sup>81</sup> It appears he is concerned to include information with the exclusive purpose of explaining foreign techniques and behaviour in combat, in order to introduce the nature of battle against this particular enemy.

Following a brief description of combat, the final part of the narrative also demonstrates a construction directed at the representation of the enemy, as it is highly selective regarding the activity described.<sup>82</sup> Caesar finishes the battle with the taking of the enemy baggage, and only elaborates for the audience the events that occurred at the wagons.<sup>83</sup> Other Gallic contingents disappear from the narrative, as evident in the statement: *alteri se, ut coeperant, in montem receperunt, alteri ad impedimenta et carros suos se contulerunt*.<sup>84</sup> There is absolutely no information on how this other Gallic element fair, demonstrating how selective he is regarding the closing passage of the narrative.<sup>85</sup> The selection of this aspect of the battle suggests it is chosen deliberately for an illustrative purpose rather to provide information on the course and rewards of battle.

The introductory purpose of the final passage is apparent as it concentrates on distinctive enemy characteristics. As Williams notes, the structure of the initial section with the *pila* gives way to a smoother style for the main confrontation, before switching back for this final encounter around the wagons, so that there appears to be

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note that in no other battle do the shields play a part in the combat, and neither does Caesar describe a *phalanx* being formed. Consequently, the description of the enemy formation in the Germanic battle is less about describing ethnic fighting practices and more to do with Caesar contextualising the actions of the Romans as a reaction to the fighting style of their opponents.

<sup>81</sup> It is also interesting to note that Caesar at 1.29.1 mentions specifically the discovery of Greek documents in the Helvetian camp, suggesting he wishes to establish a link between Gauls and Greeks. A Greek author is also mentioned in the excursus on Germani at 6.24.2. It is unclear if this has a relationship to the use of the *phalanx*.

<sup>82</sup> Note the smoothness and brief detail in the central section of the account at 1.25.6-1.25.7. These also appear as Caesar reacts to the arrival of the Boii and Tulingi in the flank. This could possibly be designed to show the ease of Roman manoeuvrability on the battlefield, as the third line counters the enemy threat. 1.25.6-1.25.7.

<sup>83</sup> 1.26.1-1.26.4.

<sup>84</sup> 1.26.1-1.26.2.

<sup>85</sup> They disappear at 1.26.1.

literary emphasis similar to how the battle was begun.<sup>86</sup> As this is the first mention of a situation in the battle where the Romans take wounds, in spite of the length of the battle so far, the final stage is also more desperate in comparison to the rest of the event, and therefore notable.<sup>87</sup> As Caesar states:

Ad multam noctem etiam ad impedimenta pugnatum est, propterea quod pro vallo carros obiecerant et e loco superiore in nostros venientes tela coniciebant et nonnulli inter carros rotasque mataras ac tragulas subiciebant nostrosque vulnerabant. diu cum esset pugnatum, impedimentis castrisque nostri potiti sunt.<sup>88</sup>

The account ends in a description of combat that draws attention to a distinctive feature of the enemy, as it focuses on combat around their wagons.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, the information on dart and javelin throwers establishes their ethically different status, through their use of foreign weapons.<sup>90</sup> The concluding passage, centred as it is on this one point of the battle, appears deliberately chosen to introduce the enemy by focussing on aspects that are different to Roman warfare and society.

Furthermore the final stage of the narrative is also an examination of the behaviour of this new enemy. The passage follows a description of Helvetian courage that contextualises events, when Caesar states: *aversum hostem videre nemo potuit*.<sup>91</sup> The image of Gauls fighting from below the wagons supports this objective as it evokes the idea of men being systematically sought out in their hiding places among the defences, as they put up individual resistance.<sup>92</sup> In this respect the use of the word *nonnulli* vividly creates the image of individuals, who are described *inter carros rotasque* so the audience can visualise where they are placed.<sup>93</sup> The use of the imperfect and participles in the passage, such as *venientes*, *coniciebant*, *subiciebant*

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<sup>86</sup> Williams (1985) pp. 223-224. As Williams notes, repetition of forms of *iacere* and the abrupt syntax reflect the exhaustion of the combatants at this stage of the battle.

<sup>87</sup> See Williams (1985) p. 224. Melchior (2004) p. 35 notes the impacts of wounds in this battle.

<sup>88</sup> 1.26.3-1.26.4.

<sup>89</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 55, on the nomadic representation.

<sup>90</sup> Caesar could have simply used *tela* to describe the missiles.

<sup>91</sup> 1.26.3. Jervis (2001) p. 78. On problems with this concept see Gerlinger (2008) pp. 144-146.

<sup>92</sup> See also Avaricum at 7.25.1-7.26.1, and the description of Gauls desperately trying to destroy the Roman siege works. It is another account that establishes the fundamentally tenacious nature of the Gauls as individuals.

<sup>93</sup> The scene is of individuals among the carts and wheels, fiercely resisting until rooted out by the Romans.



and *vulnerabant* are also demonstrative of Gallic tenacity in defeat.<sup>94</sup> As a representation of Gallic behaviour, through the final, inexorable process of mopping up and butchering the enemy, the fighting among the wagons is indicative of their tenacity and courage.<sup>95</sup> The selection of detail is influenced by the need to define enemy character in combat, and the purpose of the battle in defining behaviour fundamentally influences the choice of content in this final stage of the account.

In the first major battle narrative of the *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar utilises the content to focus on the unusual and challenging nature of the enterprise undertaken in Gaul. The pila volley is described in detail in order to focus on the physical form of the enemy, their tenacity and foreignness. Similarly, the fighting among the wagons is selected for elaboration as it highlights the difference between Romans and this nomadic people, while further building up a worthy enemy through the difficulties described in bringing them to defeat. The first major battle of the work therefore appears important to Caesar for its role in introducing and defining the enemy for his audience, and establishing the characteristics that he desires to convey.

### **The Nature of the Belgic Multitude**

Battle narrative is not just introductory, but can also serve to assign negative features to the enemy. While Caesar builds up his Gallic enemy in the Helvetii narrative described above, that representation is not necessarily evident in all accounts. The topos of the Belgic multitude, discussed in Chapter One, is created not only to describe the size of the force, but to attribute to it a disruptive and unmartial quality.<sup>96</sup> Strabo and Diodorus Siculus have both noted the warlike nature of the Gauls, but Caesar qualifies this concept in his interpretation of the Belgae.<sup>97</sup> Their vast army is presented as part of a violent rebellion or other form of resistance to with a distinct

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<sup>94</sup> 1.26.3-1.26.4.

<sup>95</sup> Note how Caesar makes no mention of any flight in this battle, except a general retreat during the night at 1.26.5.

<sup>96</sup> See 2.1-2.11, discussed above at pp. 71-88. See also Mannetter (1995) pp. 153-154; Seager (2003) p. 29. Hall (1998) p. 12 also notes Roman values i.e. *constantia* are compared to the *mobilitate et levitate animi* of Gauls such as the Belgae 2.1.3 and states that examples are more than 'nationalistic self-advertisement'. For Hall at p. 15, these are about Caesar's "national" Romanness controlling the world. See also Kraus (2009) pp. 165-166 on the fractious nature of the Gauls. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 56.

<sup>97</sup> Strabo *Geog* 4.4.2, Diodorus Siculus 5.29.

lack of martial quality to their actions. The battle and its contextual data are presented so that the creation of the topos is not just a simplification of battlefield circumstances. It is designed to attribute negative characteristics to the enemy and encourage an interpretation of them for the audience.

The idea of a multitude as a negative entity is established throughout the *Bellum Gallicum*, so that the Belgae appear as a manifestation of generally bad traits. Caesar uses the word *multitudo* to describe the Romans when they perform poorly; demonstrating that the word does not just indicate the size of an entity but that there is a lack of military prowess or organisation in such a body.<sup>98</sup> In addition, multitudes have popular or criminal connotations, as clarified elsewhere in the work where a multitude is made up of *latrones* or other unsavoury elements.<sup>99</sup> Moreover *multitudo* is placed in opposition to exemplary characters, such as Lucius Vorenus, Titus Pullo and Marcus Petronius, so that the word stands against heroic *exempla*.<sup>100</sup> Caesar is therefore not just adopting the term as a numeric indicator, but is associating it with mobs and other unsavoury gatherings, possibly drawing on the popular connotations of the word.<sup>101</sup> The representation is congruent with an overall scheme, where enemy numbers are associated with martial weakness or placed in opposition to exemplary action.

The representative role of the multitude is evident as it is ascribed with some fundamentally negative qualities regarding order and the lawful state of affairs. This appears in the passages preceding battle, where increasing detail is given about the host as the narrative progresses, with the following stated:

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<sup>98</sup> See Caesar's cavalry when defeated at 1.15.3. Note how this does not conflict with the idea that they are individually courageous, as established in the manner they fight at 2.11. However as an entity, the multitude does not display martial skill. Schadee (2008) p. 159 notes a campaign oriented representation of Gauls in general, which could explain a general inconsistency between the idea the Belgae are strong in the introduction at 1.1, and their representation in this confrontation. See also 7.70.3 for Gauls in flight at Alesia.

<sup>99</sup> For the use of multitude, see 5.27.4 for popular connotations, 3.17.4 for negative associations with *latrones*. See also negative judgements 1.2.5, 1.15.3. On the general poor behaviour of Gauls see Riggsby (2006) pp. 56, 61.

<sup>100</sup> See 5.44.6, 7.50.4. On *exempla* see pp. 116-123.

<sup>101</sup> The word does have popular connotations see Cicero *Dom* 4, *Att* 2.21.1, Livy 6.1.10, 24.25.8, but how far Caesar draws on the political meaning is unclear. Within the *Bellum Gallicum* however, it has strong negative connotations.

Reliquos omnes Belgas in armis esse Germanosque, qui cis Rhenum incolant, sese cum his coniunxisse, tantumque esse eorum omnium furorem, ut ne Suessiones quidem fratres consanguineosque suos, qui eodem iure et isdem legibus utantur, unum imperium unumque magistratum cum ipsis habeant, detertere potuerint, quin cum iis consentirent.<sup>102</sup>

This iteration of rumour and intelligence reinforces the character of the conflict and the dreadful nature of the conspiracy, with the use of *tantum...furorem* an indication that this multitude exists in a state far from ordered affairs.<sup>103</sup> Caesar even uses anecdotal information, such as the statement that relatives and brothers have joined up with the enemy, and describes the terrible scope of the threat as it overcomes law and order. Details are included in order to establish the existence of the Belgic host in opposition to ideas of order and stability.

The representation of the enemy as inherently destabilising is evident in the catalogue of forces, examined in Chapter One, which is structured to convey the disordered nature of the host.<sup>104</sup> While the tribes are generally listed in decreasing order of numbers provided, with some exceptions among the lesser tribes, the issue of leadership is one that Caesar makes clear is at odds with the contributions, as the Bellovaci have promised the greatest number with even more in reserve, and demand the leadership of the whole war.<sup>105</sup> However the Suessones, with fewer men, are actually given command.<sup>106</sup> Consequently there is disharmony between the sizes of contingents in the catalogue of troops, and the presentation of leadership, so that the tribes are presented as joined together in uneasy alliance.<sup>107</sup> Importantly, the dissent of the Bellovaci shows that they will not just defer to leadership that is just and wise,

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<sup>102</sup> 2.3.4-2.3.5. The need for this elaboration for the audience in terms of explaining Caesar's activity is superfluous, as Caesar has already acted, by bringing his army in response to the confirmation by the Senones and the other Gauls.

<sup>103</sup> See *Aeneid* 1.150 for a similar representation of *furor*.

<sup>104</sup> 2.4.

<sup>105</sup> 2.4.5-2.4.6. See also 7.36, 7.63. Caesar places emphasis in the inherent divisiveness and desire for command among the enemy. See Mannetter (1995) p. 148, in particular of the Alesia catalogue. On the idea of disorganisation in the order of a catalogue see Mannetter (1995) p. 153.

<sup>106</sup> 2.4.6-2.4.8. The Suessones have command due to the *iustitia* and *prudentia* of Galba. Mannetter (1995) p. 153 notes how the leader Galba plays no part in the actual war yet gets a name. See 2.13 for the next mention of Galba.

<sup>107</sup> Mannetter (1995) pp. 153-154. The description of Galba is not evidence that Caesar regards the identification of leaders as important. As is clear in the description of the Bellovaci, Caesar does not always list who the leaders are.

since such characteristics are specifically mentioned of the actual leader, Galba of the Suessones.<sup>108</sup> The catalogue of troops is used to create the impression of disorganisation and disrespect for good rule.

The catalogue also illustrates the inherently dangerous and destabilising nature of the Belgic host, as it aligns them with the Germani, who had been described as disruptive in the previous book.<sup>109</sup> Caesar describes racial origins that associate the Belgae closely with a major antagonist who previously upset the order of affairs by entering Gaul and appropriating land by force. Moreover the Belgic roots even show an association through similarity of actions. Like Ariovistus, the Belgae came from across the Rhine, drawn by the wealth of the land, and they appropriated it for themselves, even expelling the local inhabitants.<sup>110</sup> By describing the catalogue so, the Belgae are associated not only with recent enemies of Rome but with their destabilising influence.

The Belgae are further portrayed as just like these traditional enemies, so that the host is established as fundamentally aggressive in nature. A historical injustice against the Romans is introduced when Caesar states:

...Gallosque, qui ea loca incolerent, expulisse solosque esse qui patrum nostrorum memoria omni Gallia vexata Teutonos Cimbrosque intra suos fines ingredi prohibuerint.<sup>111</sup>

That the Belgae are no better is evident through the use of *memoria*, used to link the deed from the past with the present behaviour of the Belgae.<sup>112</sup> The Belgae also took on martial airs as a result of this history, evident in the statement: *earum rerum memoria magnam sibi auctoritatem magnosque spiritus in re militari sumerent*.<sup>113</sup> The Belgae may have stopped the Teutones and Cimbri, but their immediate response within the narrative is to behave poorly, assuming *magnos spiritus*, and the memory

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<sup>108</sup> 2.4.7.

<sup>109</sup> See 2.4.2 for their Germani roots. See 1.49-1.53 for the Germanic battle. In particular see 1.31 for the effect of the Germani on Gaul.

<sup>110</sup> 2.4.1-2.4.2.

<sup>111</sup> 2.4.2. See also pp. 113-116 above on the Tigurini, and p. 187 below on the Aduatuci.

<sup>112</sup> 2.4.3.

<sup>113</sup> 2.4.3.

of their deed is twisted into personal ambition, thus making them no better than their enemies.<sup>114</sup> Their resistance to invasion is in itself a source of disharmony, in order to assist in their representation as a dangerous and destabilising entity.

Such ideas are developed further through anecdotal information provided in the catalogue. Caesar specifically uses the word *multitudo* in conjunction with destabilising behaviour when the Bellovaci desire command, as they demand rule in part due to their numbers of men.<sup>115</sup> There is therefore an association between the catalogue and ideas of arrogance and desire for command. Such a representation is consistent with another account, the Helvetian migration, where they felt constrained by their surroundings: *pro multitudine autem hominum et pro gloria belli atque fortitudinis angustos se fines habere arbitrabantur*.<sup>116</sup> The catalogue of the Belgae similarly utilises the numbers of the Bellovaci to establish characteristics such as ambition, arrogance and generally disruptive behaviour.

Finally, the catalogue closes with a reminder of the expansive nature of the Belgic host as it associates the last tribal groups with their Germanic origins. The Condrusi, Eburones, Caerosi, and Paemani are described as Germani.<sup>117</sup> By grouping them together Caesar clarifies the link between the past and the current conflict. The Belgae were originally Germanic; they are acting the same as the Germani, and even include those people in their ranks. The positioning of these tribes at the end of the catalogue, even though they are providing similar numbers of troops to the smaller Belgic tribes, gives them prominence in rounding off the ideas of expansion and aggression. The catalogue, as part of the general topos of the multitude, is a stylistic device used primarily to support the representation of the participants, in this case to refine through the contextual information the inherently destabilising nature of the enemy.

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<sup>114</sup> Moreover, at 2.4.7 Caesar specifies that Diviciacus was King *nostra etiam memoria* the repeated use of the word *memoria* linking him personally to the airs they took on at 2.4.3.

<sup>115</sup> *et virtute et auctoritate et hominum numero valere* 2.4.5.

<sup>116</sup> 1.2.5. As can also be seen when comparing the two passages, the implication of the word with regards to the Helvetii is of an unnatural amount, as their multitude is too great for their borders. See also 5.27.4 for the overturning of leadership. This is often the case in the *Bellum Gallicum* that the word is specifically associated with a threat, usually in battle. See 1.35.3, 1.33.3, 1.44.6, 1.52.6, 2.8.4. The depiction of the Belgic host also has the connotation that it should not exist under normal circumstances.

<sup>117</sup> *uno nomine Germani appellantur* 2.4.10.

Not only is the host of the enemy a disruptive force, but it acts in a simple and unsophisticated manner. Enemy motivation and plans in battle are presented to reduce their activity and command structure to a simple form, so that there is no apparent order or structure to their behaviour. This is evident in the crossing of a river:

Ibi vadis repertis partem suarum copiarum traducere conati sunt eo consilio, ut, si possent, castellum, cui praeerat Q. Titurius legatus, expugnarent pontemque interscinderent, si minus potuissent, agros Remorum popularentur, qui magno nobis usui ad bellum gerendum erant, commeatuque nostros prohiberent.<sup>118</sup>

Caesar does not describe which elements attempt to cross the shallows; only that part of the overall force does so, the use of the third person plural in *conati sunt* reducing the command structure to its most basic element.<sup>119</sup> The host is also given a general lack of thoughtfulness and acts in haste as apparent in the statement: *hostes protinus ex eo loco ad flumen Axonam contenderunt*.<sup>120</sup> The enemy, in spite of its huge numbers acts as a single unit in rushing to the river, and Caesar carefully describes its action as performed *protinus*, to give it haste and lack of thought.<sup>121</sup> The lack of detail gives the impression of a mass acting in a unified and thoughtless manner, so that the topos of the multitude supports the objective by establishing the fundamentally disorganised behaviour of the enemy.

The word *multitudo* is also used to ascribe qualities to the host such as barbarism and relative primitiveness. This is evident in the description of the assault on Bibrax:

Ab his castris oppidum Remorum nomine Bibrax aberat milia passuum octo. id ex itinere magno impetu Belgae oppugnare coeperunt. aegre eo die sustentatum est. Gallorum eadem atque Belgarum oppugnatio est haec: ubi circumiecta multitudo hominum totis moenibus undique in murum lapides iaci coepti sunt murusque defensoribus nudatus est, testudine facta portas succendunt murumque subruunt.

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<sup>118</sup> 2.9.4-2.9.5.

<sup>119</sup> 2.9.4.

<sup>120</sup> 2.9.3-2.9.4.

<sup>121</sup> A total of 306,000 according to Caesar's catalogue.

quod tum facile fiebat. Nam cum tanta multitudo lapides ac tela conicerent, in muro consistendi potestas erat nulli.<sup>122</sup>

In this passage there is no discussion of the attack, but instead the account digresses into a discussion of Gallic siege techniques that stresses the primitiveness of their methods.<sup>123</sup> What the Belgae lack in technology is made up for in numbers, as the success of Gallic siege methodology is due to the multitude of men, which enables them to surround a town, and the multitude of missiles that they are able to hurl and strip the wall of defenders.<sup>124</sup> The repetition of *multitudo* here is important, as it attributes success in Gallic sieges not so much to leadership, but to sheer mass of men and weapons.<sup>125</sup> The digression on siege tactics is a development of the idea of the Belgic mass, and ensures that while no details are provided of the actual assault, the idea of a barbaric mob is reinforced through the description of ethnic fighting techniques.

Importantly the digression places representation over an explanation of the battle, as it does not describe why the Belgae are unable to successfully assault Bibrax in this endeavour. According to the description of siege techniques, the Belgae are generally successful due to the numbers of men involved.<sup>126</sup> In this case the vast numbers of the Belgae should, by the standard applied, ensure success, however as the narrative illustrates, the Belgae leave off the assault before it is finished.<sup>127</sup> The digression may function to enhance the numeric theme, but is not helpful in explaining the way the events unfold in this particular siege, in fact acting contrary to the details provided on Belgic numbers. It furthers the image of the Belgae as a mass reliant on their numbers for success, without reference to the result of the particular encounter.

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<sup>122</sup> 2.6.1-2.6.4.

<sup>123</sup> On technological development see Riggsby (2006) p. 76.

<sup>124</sup> In sieges they achieve success through sheer weight of numbers. It is possible to see them as little different to the weapons they use, merely serving as the means of hurling those weapons. See Riggsby (2006) p. 76.

<sup>125</sup> While the formation of a tortoise suggests discipline and leadership, it is clear that it only succeeds due to the numbers, through the *nam* clause that follows.

<sup>126</sup> 2.6.3-2.6.4.

<sup>127</sup> Caesar attributes this to the arrival of his light armed troops at Bibrax, which is in itself problematic as discussed at pp. 77-79 above.

The final lines of the passage sum up the theme of the battle, and the multitude of the enemy is defeated consistent with the way it has been portrayed thus far. The Belgae retreat is described as *fecerunt ut consimilis fugae profectio videretur* thereby providing the implication of a rout, even though no actual flight occurs, since the enemy have chosen to return home.<sup>128</sup> While the Roman pursuit is described as causing significant casualties, the use of *occasumque solis* as the only thing that stopped the slaughter focuses on the difference of the multitude to the superior Roman forces.<sup>129</sup> At the end, the enemy appear more as a mob than a military force; the killing of them is accomplished with ease and the theme is closed in this passage. Given the chance, Caesar suggests that the Romans can kill as many of these enemies as there is time in the day, so that the battle addresses, and resolves the representation of the multitude and his own opinion of such an entity.

### **The Traits of the Aduatuci**

The siege of Aduatuca is another account where the narrative is designed to attribute traits to the enemy through the course of the confrontation.<sup>130</sup> Caesar integrates contextual aspects of the battle, in particular the terrain and history, with the representation of the Aduatuci, so that these features support the idea that the enemy is particularly arrogant and belligerent.<sup>131</sup> Details such as siege works, surrendered weapons, the plans of the enemy and even the casualties are all designed to support this representation, even where these create inconsistencies in terms of motivation and the course of the battle.<sup>132</sup> The construction of the passage develops concepts and includes details to support Caesar's interpretation of the participants.

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<sup>128</sup> 2.11.1-2.11.2. In the final passage the mob assumes its lowest form as simply a mass of individuals to be killed. Caesar clarifies this at the opening of the chapter, stating that they left their camp without order or leadership. The emphasis on killing supports this. The enemy are not a fighting force any more, as evident in *nullo certo ordine neque imperio*.

<sup>129</sup> 2.11.6. See also 1.50.3-1.50.4 where the description of the setting sun puts an end to some bitter fighting that is summarised simply through reference to wounds given and received, a highly stylised passage as well. See also 3.15.5, for night brings an end to the destruction of the Venetii.

<sup>130</sup> 2.29-2.33.

<sup>131</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 56-57 on aggression. See also Strabo *Geog* 4.4.2, Diodorus Siculus 5.29.

<sup>132</sup> See Paul (1982) on siege topos in general. Caesar's account is specifically directed at the representation of the enemy.



The narrative is designed to attribute universality to the qualities of the enemy, as it ensures that this particular siege is representative of the relationship of Romans to the whole people faced. This is apparent as all of them are described as present at the siege, clear in the statement: *cunctis oppidis castellisque desertis sua omnia in unum oppidum...contulerunt*.<sup>133</sup> Whether this was possible within the time frame that followed the battle of the Nervii is unclear, however it ensures there is completeness to the story of this people and that all are witness to the events.<sup>134</sup> The qualification provides a unitary nature to the observations of the battle as applicable to the Aduatuci as a people.<sup>135</sup> The entire people are present as witnesses and participants in the events that follow, and any description applicable to them is in a completely representative capacity.

The description of Roman siege works is the most apparent use of battle to define the Aduatuci, as details of the assault preparations are used to establish the enemy preconceptions of superiority. Caesar describes the events as follows:

Ubi vineis actis aggere exstructo turrin procul constitui viderunt, primum inridere ex muro atque increpitare vocibus, quod tanta machinatio a tanto spatio instrueretur: quibusnam manibus aut quibus viribus praesertim homines tantulae staturae, nam plerumque omnibus Gallis prae magnitudine corporum suorum brevitudo nostra contemptui est, tanti oneris turrin in muro posse conlocare confiderent? Ubi vero moveri et adpropinquare moenibus viderunt, nova atque inusitata specie commoti legatos ad Caesarem de pace miserunt, qui ad hunc modum locuti non se existimare Romanos sine ope divina bellum gerere, qui tantae altitudinis machinationes tanta celeritate promovere et ex propinquitate pugnare possent, se suaque omnia eorum potestati permittere dixerunt. Unum petere ac deprecari: si forte pro sua clementia ac mansuetudine, quam ipsi ab aliis audirent, statuisset Aduatucos esse conservandos, ne se armis despoliaret. sibi omnes fere finitimos esse inimicos ac

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<sup>133</sup> 2.29.2-2.29.3.

<sup>134</sup> According to Caesar the Aduatuci were on their way to join the Nervii. See 2.29.1. By describing them as a whole however, the Aduatuci serve as internal witnesses to the events, a concept Feldherr discusses in regards to Livy. See Feldherr (1998) pp. 4, 10. Kraus (2007) p. 375 Quintilian 8.3.66-8.3.70. The major example of spectacle is at Alesia, discussed below at pp. 270-276. However see also pp. 333-334 on combat in Britain, pp. 221-222 on Caesar in the Venetii account.

<sup>135</sup> Note however that the Aduatuci revolt again at 5.38, so like the Nervii there is completeness to the episode at odds with the historical context. See above p. 51 on the Nervii.

suae virtuti invidere, a quibus se defendere traditis armis non possent. sibi praestare, si in eum casum deducerentur, quamvis fortunam a populo Romano pati, quam ab his per cruciatum interfici, inter quos dominari consuissent.<sup>136</sup>

The point of view adopted in this passage is that of the enemy, so that the audience considers the events being depicted from their frame of view and the *homines tantulae staturae* are visualised through their perspective, where the comparative smallness of the Romans is emphasised.<sup>137</sup> The contempt of the Aduatuci is evident as they look down not only on the siege works but the smaller Romans themselves.<sup>138</sup> The narrative is specifically directed to achieve this, as the actual construction of ramp and mantlets are in an ablative absolute construction and the view of the siege tower is presented through the perspective of the Aduatuci.<sup>139</sup> The text is structured to develop the character of the Aduatuci as it focuses the activity of the battlefield through their position in order to highlight their complacency and arrogance as defenders.

Furthermore the topography of the battlefield is integrated into this representation, so that physical circumstances reinforce the purpose of establishing the character of the Aduatuci. Caesar describes the dimensions and structure of the town early in the narrative, in order to impress on the audience concepts of loftiness, size and superiority:

Quod cum ex omnibus in circuitu partibus altissimas rupes despectusque haberet, una ex parte leniter acclivis aditus in latitudinem non amplius ducentorum pedum relinquebatur; quem locum duplici altissimo muro munierant; tum magni ponderis saxa et praeacutas trabes in muro conlocabant.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> 2.30.3-2.31.6.

<sup>137</sup> 2.30.4. This theme is further indicated as the movement of the siege works are also reflected through the observations of the enemy. The similarity of construction in the two passages, which both use the action to develop the attitudes of the Aduatuci, demonstrates how Caesar's purpose is to define their behaviour. See Pascucci (1973) p. 493.

<sup>138</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 49-53 on size, pp. 73-105 on the changing nature of siege craft and the representation of the Gauls as foreigners.

<sup>139</sup> 2.30.3.

<sup>140</sup> 2.29.3-2.29.4.

The town, like the Aduatuci, has a *despectus* on the Romans.<sup>141</sup> Caesar then describes the dimensions of the slope that provides egress to the town, and ends the technical description with the Aduatuci engaged in activity on the walls, preparing large beams and boulders, ensuring that the passage ends with the people and the town working together against the Romans.<sup>142</sup> Consequently the people and the town are closely linked, with characteristics of the town and the people interwoven in the narrative. The physical dimensions of the fortress are therefore contextualised within the thematic design regarding the arrogance of the people.<sup>143</sup> The fort is more than a topographical feature, as it is integrated into the presentation of the enemy.

The purpose of the battle is evident as the historical context is used to clearly establish their aggressive and dangerous nature. Immediately following the description of the town, the history of the Aduatuci is described, most importantly their link to the Cimbri and Teutoni, thereby establishing the Aduatuci as historical enemies of Rome.<sup>144</sup> As Caesar states:

Ipsi erant ex Cimbris Teutonisque prognati, qui cum iter in provinciam nostram atque Italiam facerent, iis impedimentis, quae secum agere ac portare non poterant, citra flumen Rhenum depositis custodiam ex suis ac praesidium, sex milia hominum, una reliquerunt. hi post eorum obitum multos annos a finitimis exagitati, cum alias bellum inferrent, alias inlatum defenderent, consensu eorum omnium pace facta hunc sibi domicilio locum delegerunt.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> See p. 185 fn. 134 above and pp. 270-272 below on Alesia.

<sup>142</sup> The use of the imperfect in *conlocabant* ensures that there is activity, and the people have a physical presence in the narrative at this point. For *dispicio*, see also Octodurus and enemy motivation discussed above at p. 92.

<sup>143</sup> As Riggsby (2006) pp. 79-80 notes such descriptions, particularly at 7.23 and the technical description of Gallic walls are designed to highlight aspects of Gallic character, in that case, their technological development. Note however in this instance the parallel between the walls, and Gallic size, both of which Caesar is able to neutralise in the battle.

<sup>144</sup> This is also seen in the catalogue of the Belgae at 2.4.3 where history is used to define their warlike and arrogant nature. See Riggsby (2006) p. 49. Just as the catalogue of the Belgae used the Germani, described above at pp. 180-181, so too history it is used here, more obviously to establish the status of the Aduatuci as enemies, even though, as Caesar describes, they were clearly not part of the forces who came into conflict directly with Rome.

<sup>145</sup> 2.29.4-2.29.5.

In this passage Caesar establishes that the Aduatuci have a history of violent behaviour in a belligerent environment.<sup>146</sup> The history of animosity is directly linked to historical enemies of Rome through the origins of this people who were part of the migration of the Cimbri and Teutones. This historical background is consequently directed at illustrating the aggressive nature of the enemy and their hostile relationship to Rome, as part of the development of their character.

Caesar also demonstrates that this historical context is currently applicable as the Aduatuci demonstrate further aggressive behaviour. The siege commences with acts of aggression by the Aduatuci, who make frequent forays and engage in skirmishes.<sup>147</sup> In spite of advancing into the lands of the Aduatuci, the Romans do not, within this passage, open hostilities, and the Aduatuci notably are the only aggressors as the Romans perform a circumvallation.<sup>148</sup> Importantly, the construction of the Roman circumvallation happens after the description of these attacks, giving it a defensive quality.<sup>149</sup> This quite striking disjunction in the aggressive dimension of the siege allows the development of the Aduatuci's belligerence to continue unimpeded from the previous historical description.<sup>150</sup> The reference to their genealogy and history continues into the opening of the siege in order to demonstrate the continuation of the historical context into current behaviour.

Once defeated, the terms and description of the surrender are important as they also identify traits of this people. The literary element to the presentation of the negotiations is most present in the role that the arms play within the narrative, as the

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<sup>146</sup> There are some problems apparent in this introduction in contextualising the battle. First, the Aduatuci are described as originating from only 6,000, who were left as a guard to equipment and livestock when the Cimbri and Teutones passed through. How they then became a people with numerous towns and a large force of armed men is not explained. At 2.29.1 Caesar also opens this account with a reminder that he has mentioned the tribe before, and that they were coming to aid the Nervii. The mention of the Nervii clearly serves to justify the following siege on the grounds that the Aduatuci are hostile to the Romans. While the Aduatuci played no active role in either the main battle with the Belgae or the Sabis river confrontation, the reminder stresses that they were involved, albeit peripherally. The opening introduction to the siege is not a military assessment of the forces of the enemy, but rather ensures that the defenders are placed within the framework of the Belgic opposition and the previous battles.

<sup>147</sup> 2.30.1-2.30.2. See pp. 163-164 above on Gallic aggression. See also 2.4 on history and arrogance.

<sup>148</sup> 2.30.1-2.30.3.

<sup>149</sup> 2.30.2-2.30.3. Note how the circumvallation is described as a precondition of the Aduatuci staying in their defences, rather than as an active Roman project.

<sup>150</sup> McDougall (1991) p. 629 notes that Dio generally spends significantly more time on the Aduatuci siege than the Sabis River battle, with more emphasis on aspects critical of Caesar.

surrender of Aduatucan weapons is given a striking level of detail in order to establish the warlike nature of the enemy.<sup>151</sup> The anecdotal statement about the size of the mound of weapons, which almost reaches the walls, draws attention to the initial presentation of the Aduatuci, by serving as a visible reminder of their initial contempt for the Romans as they watched from above.<sup>152</sup> Caesar also states that this was not even their whole stockpile of weapons as indicated by the comment: *tamen circiter parte tertia, ut postea perspectum est, celata atque in oppido retenta, portis patefactis eo die pace sunt usi.*<sup>153</sup> As the great pile of arms that the Aduatuci hurl from the walls is huge, but is not their whole store, Caesar indicates the sheer volume of weaponry owned by this aggressive tribe. The close contrast in this instance of *pax* and *celo* also indicate the guilt of the Aduatuci, and makes clear that they are holding back from surrender, tainting the peace that Caesar states he supplies.<sup>154</sup> He further states that they are able to quickly manufacture additional arms, so innovative are they in the preparation for war.<sup>155</sup> Consequently the description of surrendered arms has a strong thematic purpose in developing the warmongering nature of the Aduatuci, and the nature of their belligerence.

In the description of the plans of the Aduatuci to betray the Romans, the narrative supports the representation without addressing actual military objectives. The manner the Aduatuci break the peace is described as follows:

Sub vesperum Caesar portas claudi militesque ex oppido exire iussit, ne quam noctu oppidani a militibus iniuriam acciperent. illi ante inito ut intellectum est consilio, quod deditione facta nostros praesidia deducturos aut denique indiligentius servaturos crediderant, partim cum iis quae retinuerant et celaverant armis, partim scutis ex cortice factis aut viminibus intextis, quae subito ut temporis exiguitas postulabat, pellibus induxerant, tertia vigilia, qua minime arduus ad nostras

<sup>151</sup> 2.31.4-2.31.5. The Aduatuci ask to keep their arms, in a passage that reminds the audience of the way they and their neighbours constantly make war on each other, and links this statement with the historical war making of the people.

<sup>152</sup> See 2.32.4. See Webb (2012) p. 12.

<sup>153</sup> 2.32.4.

<sup>154</sup> See 2.32.4.

<sup>155</sup> 2.33.2. This matches their warlike nature in general.

munitiones ascensus videbatur, omnibus copiis repente ex oppido eruptionem fecerunt.<sup>156</sup>

In this description, the contrast of Caesar's concern for the wellbeing of the townspeople and their elaborate plans to betray him are notable. This demonstrates that the plans and preparations support the case for the guilt of the Aduatuci. Their motivation in attacking however is unclear and although the attack seems a particularly desperate move, Caesar is remarkably silent about why they would do so, except for the assumption of natural duplicity or rashness.<sup>157</sup> This silence on motivation fails to account for the objectives the enemy hoped to achieve in performing the deed, or why they changed their previous stance.<sup>158</sup> The passage supports the thematic concern of establishing the general nature of the Aduatuci, but does so at the expense of the circumstances of battle.

Similarly, the Aduatuci act inconsistently within the narrative due to the manner they are represented. The idea that the enemy is foreign is evident in the description of Roman siege techniques, which are described as *nova et usitata* to the Aduatuci.<sup>159</sup> The enemy even state that Roman prowess may be due to divine aid, they are so impressed.<sup>160</sup> However Caesar does not explain why they could be so overawed, yet then turn on the Romans in the face of such divine assistance.<sup>161</sup> The motivation of the Aduatuci is not explained, the change in attitude of the defenders remains unclear, both being sacrificed to the thematic need of presenting the Gauls as untrustworthy and warlike.<sup>162</sup> A concept of enemy perception is raised, and then dropped, as consistency does not apply to motivation, but to the objective of representing general enemy characteristics.

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<sup>156</sup> 2.33.1-2.33.3.

<sup>157</sup> On faithlessness see Cicero *Prov Cons* 33 and Riggsby (2006) p. 56. It is possible that Caesar does not feel the need to explain their actions, as being Gauls they are in his opinion fickle and impulsive. See also 4.5, 6.20.

<sup>158</sup> See Rambaud (1966) pp. 117-118.

<sup>159</sup> 2.31.1. See also the Gauls at Noviodunum at 2.12.5.

<sup>160</sup> 2.31.2.

<sup>161</sup> 2.31.2. In this case, even the presentation of character is inconsistent or unexplained, except for the idea that the Gauls are fickle and inconsistent.

<sup>162</sup> Dodington (1980) p. 22 suggests they were not really awed by the siege works.

The one detailed description of combat is designed to establish the desperation and fierce courage of the Aduatuci. In describing an infantry attack from the town the details are highly simplified, and it is only stated that the enemy attack where the slope seems least steep.<sup>163</sup> How they reach this undefined point, whether they use sally ports or come down the rocky slopes is all absent from the narrative. In spite of this lack of clarity regarding movement, the idea that the enemy are desperate is clear, as enough details are given to establish the combat in terms of character. As Caesar states:

Pugnatumque ab hostibus ita acriter est ut a viris fortibus in extrema spe salutis iniquo loco contra eos qui ex vallo turribusque tela iacerent, pugnari debuit, cum in una virtute omnis spes consisteret.<sup>164</sup>

The use of the *debuit* places emphasis is on the type of men who would fight this way.<sup>165</sup> The enemy are willing to attack in circumstances that leaves them *impeditos* so their courage and determination is emphasised.<sup>166</sup> Gallic character is prominent here in their courage, recklessness and folly, and details that might explain their rationale for combat or their methodology are omitted. The description is indicative of how the narrative is primarily designed to support the interpretation of the enemy.

It is also notable that the casualties of battle support the impression of enemy desperation even though they are problematic in explaining the result of battle. Caesar originally stated that the Aduatuci were able to supply 19,000 men to war, suggesting that, as he states all were present in the town, 15,000 should have survived the night assault.<sup>167</sup> However he states that after the assault the town had no defence, in spite of the possible presence of such numbers to continue the fight.<sup>168</sup> From a numeric perspective there are unresolved questions. However taken purely as indicative of the character of combat, they support the representation of the enemy as warlike and

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<sup>163</sup> 2.33.2.

<sup>164</sup> 2.33.4-2.33.5.

<sup>165</sup> See also the Romans against the Germani discussed in Chapter Two pp. 155-157. The main verb *debuit* is indicative, but describes a behavioural pattern.

<sup>166</sup> See also the Gauls fighting unshielded in the Helvetii account discussed above at pp. 173-174 above and the *virtus* of the Nervii described at pp. 192-194 below.

<sup>167</sup> See 2.4.9-2.4.10. Note this is a simple mathematical analysis that reflects Caesar's disinterest in the numeric context, except where it reinforces the representation.

<sup>168</sup> Even if the enemy lost their will to fight, Caesar does not say so.

tenacious in defeat, an enemy who in fighting uphill lose 4,000 men.<sup>169</sup> The empirical problems raised by the numbers are due to the objective of the figure, which is to illustrate the enemy courage in defeat.

A primary objective in the narrative of the Aduatuci is to capture the characteristics of the enemy, which is evident in the structure and details of the account. Issues such as the contempt of the people, their perfidy and warlike nature are fundamental objectives of the narrative and appear in the description of combatants, the terrain, incidental details like the mound of surrendered weapons, and the construction of extra arms from household supplies. Even the final display of wild Gallic courage is included for its implications regarding their nature, and details like the actual sacking of the town itself are summarised only briefly in comparison.<sup>170</sup> Such details establish Caesar's preoccupation with the interpretation of participants through battle narrative and the role of battle in establishing their characteristics for his audience.

### **The *Virtus* of the Nervii**

The Sabis River is notable in its assignation of attributes as Caesar utilises the contextual details of the episode to highlight the *virtus* of the Nervii, even if the quality is not well understood throughout the course of the battle.<sup>171</sup> While this narrative is examined further in Chapter Four as Caesar constructs the overall passage in order to enhance the impact of his own contribution, as part of that objective, he also creates an enemy worthy of a great victory and the details of the encounter are used to build up the quality of the opponent.<sup>172</sup> This approach qualifies the view of Lendon who uses the Sabis River account to argue that the battles are built on three themes of *animus*, *virtus* and tactics, as Lendon regards the references to *virtus* as based on Caesar's communication of causality, an approach that does not consider

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<sup>169</sup> 2.33.5-2.33.6. Note there are no Roman casualties mentioned either, as the emphasis is on the determination of the enemy.

<sup>170</sup> 2.33.7. The issue of justification is addressed further in Chapter Five pp. 291-319 in regards to Avaricum and the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri.

<sup>171</sup> 2.15-2.28. See Riggsby (2006) p. 191. Jervis, (2001) p. 52 notes the idea of *virtus* disconnected from battle. See also Jervis (2001) p. 62 for the "moral map" of Gaul established at 1.1.3-1.1.4. Brown (1999) has an excellent overall study on the literary aspects of this battle.

<sup>172</sup> See pp. 222-238 for Caesar's more direct self-promotion through the narrative.



other authorial objectives in this analysis.<sup>173</sup> Caesar only ensures that references to *virtus* appear as part of an introduction to the battle, and details of the battle itself do not feature enemy *virtus* until the end of the passage.<sup>174</sup> Only at this point does he stress the characteristic and only then with regard to the manner that the enemy acquit themselves, where he openly states a tribute to their *virtus*.<sup>175</sup> As Brown states “The interest in *virtus* that we have noted in Caesar’s proem informs the battle-description itself, which opens and closes with vignettes of Nervian heroism”.<sup>176</sup> The use of *virtus* conveys a message about the enemy, and the narrative is essentially used to create the impression of formidable enemy worthy of the Roman commander, separate to what are identified as the important aspects of the historical victory.

Caesar’s interpretation of the enemy’s quality as adversaries is evident in the description of the Nervii’s last stand, where he openly describes his impression of them:

At hostes etiam in extrema spe salutis tantam virtutem praestiterunt, ut cum primi eorum cecidissent, proximi iacentibus insisterent atque ex eorum corporibus pugnarent, his deiectis et coacervatis cadaveribus, qui superessent ut ex tumulo tela in nostros conicerent pilaeque intercepta remitterent: ut non nequiquam tantae virtutis homines iudicari deberet ausos esse transire latissimum flumen, ascendere altissimas ripas, subire iniquissimum locum; quae facilia ex difficillimis animi magnitudo redegerat.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Lendon (1999) pp. 277, 280, 320. Lendon pp. 316-317 attempts to explain the address to *virtus* as due to Caesar’s understanding of warfare and a development of the Greek tradition of narration. For criticism of Lendon’s use of battle scenes see Gerlinger (2008) p. 26.

<sup>174</sup> Melchior (2004) p. 21 notes regarding the courage of Nervii that it shows Caesar was wise to allow the coalition to disperse at the start of Book Two. See also Rawlings (1998) p.188. fn. 30. Rawlings notes the overall frequency and use of *virtus* in the work. McDougall (1991) p. 634 notes how Dio plays down the Nervii and makes them unworthy opponents at 39.3.

<sup>175</sup> 2.27.3-2.27.5. See Lendon (1999) pp. 319, 323. Lendon argues this is due to Caesar’s understanding of the quality in actual battle. This thesis argues it is a representation of the enemy in the form taken in the text, and not reflective of Caesar providing his understanding of actual combat. See Brown (2004) p. 304 for criticism of Lendon.

<sup>176</sup> See Brown (1999) p. 335 on *virtus*.

<sup>177</sup> 2.27.3-2.27.5.

The purpose of the passage is clarified in this piece of apparent *sententia* and the best evidence of the objective regarding the battle.<sup>178</sup> Gotoff notes that the passage is unusual, and that previously scholars had even regarded it as a later emendation, due to its rather striking nature, however it is consistent with the interpretation, if not the course of the battle narrative.<sup>179</sup> The passage only provides anecdotal information, such as the Nervii fighting on top of their dead comrades, as the details support the general idea that they fought: *ut non nequiquam tantae virtutis homines iudicari deberet*.<sup>180</sup> Gerlinger also notes the problematic nature of this passage from a reconstructive perspective, highlighting the difficulties of fighting on top of soft bodies, and Caesar does not rate the ability of the Nervii to fight in this manner, except for the implication they all died.<sup>181</sup> This problem is likely due to the status of the passage as a tribute to the protagonists rather than a battlefield description, the use of *ut* indicative of how Caesar wishes his audience to assess the courage of each side.<sup>182</sup> The comparison is designed to weigh up sides and their character rather than offer a meaningful descriptive discourse on the battle.

This understanding of the battle is foreshadowed from the commencement of the campaign against the Belgae, demonstrating the extent of Caesar's concern to communicate the reputation of this particular tribe and prepare the narrative for their arrival. As part of the catalogue of the Belgae, he first introduces the Nervii as

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<sup>178</sup> See Gotoff (1984) p. 17. Note how bodies appear in order to illustrate a point about the *virtus* of the Nervii, or at 2.10.1-2.10.4 to show the sheer number of Belgae who made up the multitude. See p. 85 above. See also Livy 30.34 for bodies at Zama. On potential problems with this representation see Gerlinger (2008) pp. 150-154.

<sup>179</sup> Gotoff (1984) pp. 15-16. See also Brown (1999) pp. 341-342.

<sup>180</sup> This bears features in common with other battle narratives of the *Bellum Gallicum* where themes are enunciated through the use of generalised battle conditions. Caesar has constructed previous battles around character, for instance the types of Romans who would hurl themselves on enemy shields against Ariovistus, and the Helvetii who would shake off their shields and fight with unprotected chest. See 1.25.3-1.25.5 for the Helvetii and 1.52.5 for the fighting against the Germani. Just as with those previous encounters, Caesar makes use of a generalised aspect of character to invite the assessment of *virtus*. Important motivational aspects of the battle are abandoned to create the assessment. The implication is therefore one of choice, and a refusal to retreat. By distilling this final stage of the battle down to the generic, Caesar ensures that the issues of character and the discussion of the extraordinary courage of the Nervii are followed through to their conclusion.

<sup>181</sup> Gerlinger (2008) pp. 19, 150-154.

<sup>182</sup> Note how this qualifies Lendon (1999) pp. 318-319. Lendon believes Caesar commences with a tactical assessment of affairs, such as the terrain and the early successes of the legions on the left and in the centre. He then regards the concentration on the Twelfth Legion as evidence that Caesar wishes to highlight the importance of *animus*, and the morale of the men. Finally, the comment regarding *virtus* is seen as indicative of a Roman concern with this quality and its causal significance. For Lendon the narrative moves through three phases, from tactics to *animus* to *virtus*. This theory is imposed across the whole narrative, to explain a shift in Caesar's emphasis as the story progresses. This neglects a purpose to the writing beyond the explanation of the historical event.

*Nervios, qui maxime feri inter ipsos habeantur longissimeque absint.*<sup>183</sup> The Nervii, who do not play a major role in this earlier battle, are nevertheless given a distinctive introduction.<sup>184</sup> The audience is therefore prepared for their later role through the information that they are extremely wild, and are culturally and physically remote from the other Belgae.<sup>185</sup> In drawing attention to them, Caesar demonstrates that even in the description of a narrative in which they play no part, he is laying the foundation for the later confrontation, and the exceptional status of the Nervii is part of a pattern in the overall text.

Following the first introduction of the Nervii, Caesar makes other narrative choices in order to address their *virtus*, indicating that the Book is structured to highlight the exceptional nature of this enemy. Two states, the Bellovaci and the Suessones, receive an extended narrative of their capitulation after the Belgae are defeated.<sup>186</sup> However in narrating the third state to fall, the Ambiani, he chooses not to narrate any of the details, such as negotiations, discussions, or any physical movements of the forces.<sup>187</sup> The fate of the Ambiani is summarised with a simple statement of their surrender.<sup>188</sup> In place of more detail about the Ambiani, the narrative shifts to enquiries about the Nervii, indicating their relative importance.<sup>189</sup> The collapse of the Belgic states is not carried to a conclusion in the fall of the Ambiani, and the narration of the third state's collapse is sacrificed in order to direct attention to the representation of the Nervii, and prepare for the interpretation of their behaviour in the forthcoming battle.

The introduction of the Nervii shows clearly the pattern of addressing their *virtus*, as it gives attention to this characteristic over a more empirical assessment of the

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<sup>183</sup> 2.4.8-2.4.9.

<sup>184</sup> On the catalogue see above pp. 74-77. Caesar states that the catalogue was only those promised to the war at 2.4.8. Note also that the extra detail regarding the Nervii appears unrelated to their numerical strength, which never features again until they are defeated.

<sup>185</sup> For Melchior (2004) p. 21 the courage of Nervii shows that Caesar was wise to allow the coalition to disperse at start of Book Two.

<sup>186</sup> The fall of these states is covered at 2.12-2.14.

<sup>187</sup> 2.15.2-2.15.3.

<sup>188</sup> 2.15.2-2.15.3. *qui se suaque omnia sine mora dediderunt.*

<sup>189</sup> See 2.15.3-2.15.6. See in particular 2.15.2-2.15.3. Note the immediate shift in the statement *ab eo loco in fines Ambianorum pervenit, qui se suaque omnia sine mora dediderunt. eorum fines Nervii attingebant.*

people.<sup>190</sup> According to the text Caesar does not confirm, nor receive information about numbers or fighting strength of the enemy, instead asking about their *natura* and *mores*.<sup>191</sup> The information he receives provides elaboration on the initial assessment made in the Belgic catalogue.<sup>192</sup> As he states:

Quorum de natura moribusque cum quaereret, sic reperiebat: nullum esse aditum ad eos mercatoribus; nihil pati vini reliquarumque rerum ad luxuriam pertinentium inferri, quod his rebus relanguescere animos eorum virtutemque remitti existimarent; esse homines feros magnaue virtutis; increpitare atque incusare reliquos Belgas, qui se populo Romano dedidissent patriamque virtutem proiecissent; confirmare sese neque legatos missuros neque ullam condicionem pacis accepturos.<sup>193</sup>

The earlier description of the Nervii as *ferus* is elaborated on, with some specific details about why they are so wild and relatively hard natured compared to other Belgae.<sup>194</sup> Importantly, previous numbers cited are not qualified, and the 50,000 promised in the earlier catalogue of the Belgae remains the only figure referenced throughout the entire account.<sup>195</sup> The answer to Caesar's question elaborates on details that clarify the character of the enemy, in particular the representation as a people of exceptional *virtus*, but it is highly selective in order to address his aims for the narrative.

Caesar clearly at some point knew important tactical information about the Nervii, yet chooses to not discuss it here. As evidenced by his knowledge of the infantry focus of the Nervii, and the manner that they fortified the landscape with hedges, he seemingly knew about some of the tactics of the enemy prior to the battle.<sup>196</sup> It is most likely that neighbours of the Nervii would have known this information and provided it if asked,

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<sup>190</sup> Brown (1999) p. 334. See pp. 45-51 above on numbers. See also Pascucci (1956) p. 136.

<sup>191</sup> 2.15.3.

<sup>192</sup> 2.4.8. See Kraus (2009) p. 167. Kraus notes the segregation of those seen as distant from Rome.

<sup>193</sup> 2.15.3-2.15.6.

<sup>194</sup> For *ferus* see 2.4.8. See Riggsby (2006) p. 16 on wine. See also Brown (1999) p. 334.

<sup>195</sup> 2.4.8. Note how in the earlier Belgae account numbers were important, but now such factors are not given attention as the emphasis is on a characteristic.

<sup>196</sup> 2.17.4-2.17.5. These are discussed above at pp. 66-71. One final effect of this is that the narrator/commander is blinded to the physical location and strength of the enemy at this point, enhancing the threat of an unexpected or surprise attack, an impression that is developed as the narrative progresses.

however it is not mentioned at this point. The emphasis here is on the nature of the enemy, and tactical information regarding topography and fighting techniques are withheld.<sup>197</sup> The information on the Nervii is purely an assessment of their nature, and the absence of other information suggests that the information is being revealed in order to establish their character.

The answer to the questions about the Nervii also reveals the structural intent regarding their representation, as the use of a secondary narrator allows the passage to substitute for a speech in terms of behavioural insights.<sup>198</sup> In many battles, Caesar takes care to include speeches and negotiations where he is able to outline concepts such as the justice of the battle, and the treachery or arrogance of the enemy.<sup>199</sup> In this battle, a new protagonist is introduced but the nature of the conflict described means that there is no opportunity for negotiations. By having a secondary narrator, Caesar can integrate the representation of the enemy into his military enquiries, in particular the elements that make up their reputation for *virtus*.

The construction of the reply allows the unknown narrator's comments to blend with the attitudes of the Nervii themselves, so that the essential elements are captured and the *virtus* theme enunciated similar to how it would be in an enemy speech. This concept is evident in the structure of the passage and the manner of narration, where the identity of the character using indirect speech, evident in the accusative infinitive construction, is not clearly identified.<sup>200</sup> As Caesar is careful not to name who the speaker is, whether one of the Ambiani, or even a loyal ally like the Remi or Aedui, the words could almost be coming direct from the Nervii, and in fact suit them better than the unnamed speaker, as they are critical of anyone who would be in discussion with the Romans.<sup>201</sup> The shifting subject of the passage confirms this, as it moves from an estimation of the ways and nature of the Nervii, to their attitudes, and the

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<sup>197</sup> See 2.17.4-2.17.5. See above pp. 66-71 for a discussion of this effect.

<sup>198</sup> Martin Jr. (1965) p. 64 notes how a secondary narrator can also add veracity and examines 1.31.

<sup>199</sup> For the negotiations with the Helvetii and Ariovistus see 2.13-2.14, 1.34-1.36, 1.42. The Belgic confrontation is characterised as a conspiracy at 2.1-2.3 and the catalogue there also functions as a possible substitute for a speech to represent the character of the enemy.

<sup>200</sup> This is similar to the manner the catalogue of the Belgae was reported at 2.4 where the Remi provided the details. In effect this type of detail substitutes for conventional paired harangues that Lendon (1999) p. 275 notes is a part of battle narrative. See Marincola (2007) p. 124 and Plutarch *Mor* 803B who criticises the convention.

<sup>201</sup> Anyone in discussion with Caesar is negotiating, an activity they despise.

manner they rebuke other Belgae and refuse to engage in negotiations.<sup>202</sup> The construction of the passage shows that in spite of no direct communication existing between Caesar and the Nervii, he has a method of summing up their attitudes. The passage allows Caesar to develop the characteristics of the Nervii as it serves some of the functions of speech between the main protagonists.

This interpretation is also evident in the manner Caesar isolates the Nervii, so that the audience is directed to view them as distinct from the rest of the Belgae. The defining feature of the Belgae in Book Two is an indistinguishable mass, whose numbers are neither effective in battle nor their courage and fighting spirit exceptional.<sup>203</sup> In contrast to this mass, he states that the Nervii do not trade in common goods, with the implication that the weakness that affects others is not applicable to them.<sup>204</sup> They are isolated culturally, as they do not trade in goods they regard as subversive to their *animus*.<sup>205</sup> The Nervii even regard themselves as superior to the other tribes, rebuking those who capitulate to the Romans.<sup>206</sup> The passage even prepares the audience to admire this enemy, as Caesar implies Roman qualities in them when they despise those who would lay low *virtus* and the *patria*.<sup>207</sup> Prior to the confrontation, this passage serves to define the Nervii as protagonists different to the rest of the Belgae, and to make them worthy opponents for a Roman audience.

However the distance the Nervii have from others is only a metaphorical divide, and indicative of how the presentation is a literary construction. The Nervii are very far removed according to the catalogue; however they are also described as bordering directly on the Ambiani, a Belgic state.<sup>208</sup> The use of the superlative seems excessive considering that no emphasis is placed on the distance travelled.<sup>209</sup> The commentary

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<sup>202</sup> The Nervii are described by the unnamed speaker as contemptuous of the Belgae who capitulated, which is not strictly speaking part of their nature and ways, but something that would only come from direct communication with them.

<sup>203</sup> On the Belgae see above pp. 71-88. On their characteristics see pp. 177-184 above.

<sup>204</sup> 2.15.4. See also Jervis (2001) pp. 62-65.

<sup>205</sup> 2.15.4-2.15.5.

<sup>206</sup> 2.15.5-2.15.6. As Brown notes the description of Nervian defences is used to isolate them, as these exist to defend against their neighbours. See Brown (1999) p. 335. For the hedges see 2.17.4.

<sup>207</sup> 2.15.5-2.15.6. While Jervis (2001) p. 65 focuses on the idea of *virtus*; the mention of *patria* may deserve further attention.

<sup>208</sup> *longissimeque absint* 2.4.8-2.4.9. See 2.12-2.15 for the states that capitulate, the Suessones, Bellovaci and Ambiani. See 2.15.3 for the Nervii bordering on the Ambiani, the use of the word *attingunt* clear evidence of proximity, not distance.

<sup>209</sup> See Pelling (1981) pp. 741-742.

appears to discuss a physical factor such as distance, but it is the nature of the group that is developed.

Most importantly, this introduction functions to openly anticipate the end of the battle.<sup>210</sup> The key element of *virtus*, essential to the conclusion to the battle, is clearly enunciated here.<sup>211</sup> The courage of the Nervii is iterated several times, through the repetition of *virtus*, and their refusal to compromise on issues of courage.<sup>212</sup> The foreshadowing of their last stand at the end of the battle is evident in their contempt for those who capitulate, and their rejection of any attempts at negotiation.<sup>213</sup> The purpose of the passage is clear in preparing the audience for how the battle description closes, through the concentration on this one particular aspect of the enemy.

A second piece of intelligence gathering is utilised to further elaborate on the Nervii reputation in war, and to establish their status as worthy enemies by demonstrating their authority and power:

Cum per eorum fines triduo iter fecisset, inveniebat ex captivis Sabim flumen a castris suis non amplius milibus passuum X abesse; trans id flumen omnes Nervios consedissee adventumque ibi Romanorum exspectare una cum Atrebatibus et Viromanduis, finitimis suis nam his utrisque persuaserant, uti eandem belli fortunam experirentur; exspectari etiam ab iis Atuatuorum copias atque esse in itinere; mulieres quique per aetatem ad pugnam inutiles viderentur, in eum locum coniecisse, quo propter paludes exercitui aditus non esset.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> See Mannetter, (1995) pp. 103 on foreshadowing. Mannetter discusses 2.17.2 and the marching order. This thesis disagrees with Mannetter's idea that the mention of captives is supposed to foreshadow victory, any more than Caesar's presence as narrator foreshadows victory throughout the work. His objective, as discussed above at pp. 66-71, is to build tension as to the progress of events, and the purpose only becomes clear in the final stage of the battle.

<sup>211</sup> 2.27.3.

<sup>212</sup> 2.15.4-2.15.6.

<sup>213</sup> See Brown, (1999) pp. 333-334 who discusses how the battle is foreshadowed. However *virtus* does not inform the content of most of the battle, only the general context.

<sup>214</sup> 2.16.1-2.16.5.

Caesar uses this passage to give the Nervii prominence among their peers, situating them in a Belgic hierarchy just as he did the tribes of the catalogue.<sup>215</sup> Two tribes join the Nervii with a third on the way, peoples described as persuaded to join them. The Nervii possess a high reputation among their neighbours, enough to convince those neighbours to test out their fortunes in war together. Furthermore, Caesar relates the movement of the Aduatuci, even though the Aduatuci will not feature in this battle, so that the Nervii appear to be the locus for a gathering of forces.<sup>216</sup> The fact that these tribes were already committed to war is not mentioned here, as the instrumentality of the Nervii is the objective of the passage.<sup>217</sup> The second piece of intelligence is important as it allows the Nervii to be presented as a worthy foe, as a tribe of significance among the Belgae with a clear reputation and respect of their neighbours.

The purpose of establishing the nature of this enemy is particularly evident in the manner in which Caesar presents their campaign as an offensive one. He does not stress the essential defensiveness of the Nervian objective; instead he presents them as marshalling their forces, with a focus on their willingness to fight.<sup>218</sup> The Nervii may be stationary awaiting the Romans, but they have been busy, and have persuaded others to join them.<sup>219</sup> More importantly, they await the Romans with the objective of testing the fortunes of war, a statement that implies they are keen to try themselves against the Romans.<sup>220</sup> The repetition of *expectare...expectari* implies that they are not acting defensively but merely pausing, staying in one place and waiting for an opportunity to fight.<sup>221</sup> The repetition also foreshadows the actual battle and their attack, as the plans of the Nervii involve attacking when the baggage train comes into view, and the passage anticipates that surprise attack.<sup>222</sup> The presentation establishes

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<sup>215</sup> See the descending order of authority in the Belgae discussed at pp. 179-181 above. Note the absence of any dispute of leadership in regards to the Nervii, illustrating their uncontested authority.

<sup>216</sup> See 2.29 for their appearance after the battle.

<sup>217</sup> This presentation does not account for the fact the other tribes were part of the Belgic confederacy and already had promised men for the war. See 2.4 for the full list of tribes.

<sup>218</sup> The Nervii are after all waiting on the Romans in Belgic territory. See also the Aduatuci above pp. 184-192 for details of the warlike nature of Gauls.

<sup>219</sup> 2.16.3.

<sup>220</sup> 2.16.3-2.16.4.

<sup>221</sup> 2.16.2, 2.16.4, The repetition here gives force to the idea they are eager, rather than simply passive. McDougall (1991) p. 633 notes that in Dio the Nervii are presented more defensively in their positioning.

<sup>222</sup> Whether the attack was actually a surprise is unclear, certainly the presentation of the battle attempts to give this impression. See 2.17.2-2.17.5, for the plan.



that the forthcoming attack is related to their eagerness for combat, as the characteristics of the people and the plan are conflated to establish their aggression.

Even defensive precautions are associated with this aspect of their nature, and the manner Caesar narrates the relocation of their family members is designed to support the idea of a combat focused enemy. The Nervii are described as locating their families in marshlands because these people are the ones least useful in battle.<sup>223</sup> This reasoning suggests the Nervii are discarding the non-combatants, those useless for fighting, an action more appropriate for a tribe keen for battle. While the safety aspect is implicit in the location where they are placed, the primary reason is because these people are useless for war. The Nervii choose to settle matters in the manly act of battle and have prepared themselves accordingly, indicating that these precautions are used to show the Nervii are acting consistently with their representation as fierce warriors.

In a marked contrast to this ongoing portrayal in the campaign narrative, *virtus* is not addressed adequately in the battle, as it only exists to create a worthy enemy, rather than to explain the course of events. Caesar only contextualises the account with *virtus* at the start of battle. In his speech to the Tenth Legion *virtus* is stated to be a factor that is required by the men.<sup>224</sup> In spite of such an introduction, he does not directly use the term until the conclusion. During the battle he explains events in terms of manoeuvre, leadership and topography.<sup>225</sup> For example, the success of the Ninth and Tenth Legions is phrased in terms of a combination of terrain and the exhaustion of the enemy.<sup>226</sup> Similarly, he accounts for key actions on the battlefield in terms of training and leadership, such as the ability of the Romans to form up under pressure at the start, and his own ability to stabilise a potential rout.<sup>227</sup> Within the battle, *virtus* can only be implied, demonstrating that the term has limited application except in providing general commentary and context.

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<sup>223</sup> *ad pugnam inutiles viderentur* 2.16.5.

<sup>224</sup> 2.21.2-2.21.4.

<sup>225</sup> See pp. 222-238 below for the purpose of the details supplied.

<sup>226</sup> 2.23.1-2.23.2.

<sup>227</sup> 2.20.3-2.20.4. See 2.25.2 for Caesar opening up the maniples to prevent the rout.

The dichotomy between the impression Caesar creates, and an ostensible reconstruction of battle is never more apparent than in the closing stages of the battle, when the descriptive aspects of the narrative start to break down in favour of developing the idea of *virtus*:

Horum adventu tanta rerum commutatio est facta, ut nostri, etiam qui vulneribus confecti procubuissent, scutis innixi proelium redintegrarent, calones perterritos hostes conspicati etiam inermes armatis occurrerent, equites vero, ut turpitudinem fugae virtute delerent, omnibus in locis pugnantes studio se legionariis militibus praeferrent.<sup>228</sup>

In this description of the closing stage, important physical aspects of the battlefield disappear, such as the camp, the legions and even the locations of the units, so that where exactly this final stage occurs is unclear. Caesar does not narrate where or how Roman units contribute, such as the Tenth Legion and the arrival of the reinforcements, who merely affect what he calls *tanta...commutatio*. Even whole units disappear from the narrative, and the final fate of the Eighth and Eleventh Legions is left unsaid; the last heard of them is that they were engaged in combat near the riverbank.<sup>229</sup> Caesar almost completely abandons descriptive details, suggesting that his purpose at this point is not to summarise or clarify the actual state of the battlefield for his audience, as the narrative drops details unrelated to *virtus*.

Caesar instead chooses to describe the units who best illustrate the theme of *virtus*. Goff notes that the passage focuses on the three units who were probably least effective in bringing about the defeat of the Nervii, the wounded, cavalry and *calones*, the latter of whom are not even armed.<sup>230</sup> Nevertheless, each unit is chosen as it demonstrates aspects of courage, whether it is overcoming wounds, restoring self-esteem or fighting unarmed against armed men.<sup>231</sup> These units are unrelated in battlefield terms but are nevertheless compared through a literary matching.<sup>232</sup> *Virtus*

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<sup>228</sup> 2.27.1-2.27.3.

<sup>229</sup> 2.23.3-2.23.4. Lendon (1999) p. 319 notes the absence of these units as well.

<sup>230</sup> 2.27.1-2.27.3. See Goff (1984) pp. 15-16. As Goff states there are three groups of Romans who have to overcome a specific difficulty. Note that Caesar does not clarify if these are the cavalry who fled home, discussed below at pp. 231-232.

<sup>231</sup> See Eden (1962) p. 110.

<sup>232</sup> Goff (1984) pp. 15-16.

is highlighted through the difference in status before and after the change in circumstances, and who therefore has the greatest difficulties to overcome at this point.<sup>233</sup> Caesar concentrates on the units whose transformation from cowardice or weakness to courage is most striking, not on the most effective fighting units, as his objective is to develop a thematic, not descriptive conclusion to the battle that is focused on the representation of the enemy as a worthy foe, and the overall interpretation of the battle against that criterion.

The status of the passage as a tribute to a brave opponent is further evident in the problems it creates for understanding the overall course of battle. In the early stages of the battle, Caesar does not overtly stress the difficulties that the enemy faced, possibly to avoid influencing the tension of the early narrative.<sup>234</sup> The battle therefore lacks clarity, as Caesar withholds context for understanding the affair until the end, and only introducing the difficulties faced by the enemy at the end in praise of their *virtus*.<sup>235</sup> He also leaves the audience with an impression of courage that only seems to account for one part of the battlefield as he describes the Nervii fighting over the bodies of their fallen, and as noted above whole legions disappear from the account.<sup>236</sup> The varying criteria for inclusion demonstrate that *virtus* is applied to the character of the enemy, but at the expense of understanding the course of the whole battle.

Further information is provided that illustrates the aim of developing a worthy enemy, as the *virtus* concept is alluded to after the battle. Caesar provides an account of the devastating toll that this battle took among the Nervii, in his description of discussions with the people who were left behind by the fighting men.<sup>237</sup> This comes close to the last stand, and so provides a numeric assessment of that courage.<sup>238</sup> This

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<sup>233</sup> See fn. 230 above.

<sup>234</sup> The fact the Romans drive off some elements so easily is evidence of this, Caesar noting the effect of higher ground at 2.23.1. Nevertheless the passage has focused on the speed of the enemy, the threat to the camp and the plight of the disorganised Seventh and Twelfth Legion. See pp. 66-71 above.

<sup>235</sup> On unfavourable locations see Lendon (1999) p. 302.

<sup>236</sup> See above pp. 202.

<sup>237</sup> Again Caesar is using a secondary narrator here for verisimilitude, but with a profound literary effect. See the Helvetii battle at 1.21.1-1.21.3, where Caesar uses a census to show the scope of the slaughter, and 4.15.3 where a casualty list establishes the extent to which the threat of the Usipetes and Tencteri is eliminated.

<sup>238</sup> Brown (1999) pp. 341-342 notes this. See also the Aduatuci above at pp. 191-192.

may explain why the narrative of the battle ends with the last stand, as the literary purpose is to leave this paramount in the audience's mind.<sup>239</sup> The manner in which the *virtus* of the Nervii is referenced, from the moment they are introduced through to the negotiations with the non-combatants, suggests that the book was written with this particular interpretation of the battle in mind.

The tribute to *virtus* in the final stand of the Nervii does not provide the evidence to judge how effective the quality is in determining the course of battle, with much of the battle still unresolved at the close of narration.<sup>240</sup> Similarly, the effect of the recovery of various elements, such as the *calones* is also unexplained, and they only illustrate the theme. The shift to a discussion of *virtus* at the end of the battle is a transformation in the narrative to a purely literary assessment, based on the criteria of addressing the nature of the Nervii. The final passage is a comment on the enemy's courage, the clearest evidence that Caesar is abandoning any descriptive approach altogether to praise them with a sample vignette. In this regard, he carefully constructs his account to address the idea and to create the impression of his choosing regarding the participants.

Caesar's development of the Nervii ensures that this particular enemy is a memorable one worthy of the Roman commander. He utilises contextual information such as intelligence gathering to develop this impression, and within the battle itself concentrates on details that further emphasise the qualities of the enemy. The battle construction has an important role to play in establishing the characters' place in the narrative and their relationship to Caesar's achievements, even where this comes at the expense of clarity regarding the course of combat. The confrontation with the Nervii is therefore a distinctive example of how Caesar utilises battle to create impressions regarding the characters described, in this case to build a worthy enemy that reflects the greatness of the commander in defeating them.

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<sup>239</sup> As Brown notes, Caesar has chosen to end his battle description with this description of Nervian courage. See Brown (1999) p. 340.

<sup>240</sup> See Lendon (1999) p. 319 on missing elements at the close of the battle.

## Individual Credit and Responsibility

The role of battle in creating impressions regarding groups is matched by its portrayal of individuals, where details of conflict are selected to create or support an interpretation of particular characters. While Pitcher notes a “spareness” to Caesar’s presentation of character, the narrator still manages to encourage an impression of these individuals using battle, whether that is the diminishment of Ariovistus, where the boasts of the enemy commander are offset by his eventual defeat, or Vercingetorix, who is contrasted to Caesar in terms of his command capabilities.<sup>241</sup> The representation of these individuals through battle is addressed in their relevant case studies.<sup>242</sup> This section specifically addresses some of the individual subordinates who act in the absence of their commander, who Welch notes are generally treated well in the text.<sup>243</sup> Examples include the meritorious behaviour of Crassus against the Aquitani, where there is a clear reference to his abilities in the details of battle selected for the work.<sup>244</sup> Similarly the description of Labienus and his measures against the Eburones and Nervii in Book Five, and the Treveri in Book Six, includes details to indicate his care, foresight and ability to cope with the threat.<sup>245</sup> However, one of the most important character representations is an exception to these positive portrayals, and in Book Five, the account of battle assigns responsibility for a massacre to Sabinus.<sup>246</sup> The battle narrative displays considerable focus on this individual and his relationship to the course of events, in order to attribute direct

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<sup>241</sup> Pitcher (2007) p. 106 notes that Caesar “shows a reversion to the spareness of Herodotus and Thucydides” and that the most overt comment on character is regarding Vercingetorix at 7.4.9. Pitcher notes at p. 108 the characterisation of figures in the text. See Martin Jr. (1965) p. 64 on Ariovistus. Other major figures such as Orgetorix of the Helvetians have not been addressed in this thesis as they do not appear in battle narratives. See Barlow (1998) pp. 139ff on the representation of other figures such as Dumnorix at pp. 141-144.

<sup>242</sup> For Ariovistus see pp. 146-161 above. For Vercingetorix and Critognatus, see pp. 260-276 below.

<sup>243</sup> Welch (1998) p. 102. This qualifies Rambaud’s general views regarding blame of subordinates. See Rambaud (1966) p. 208. Ash states that historians suppress role of middle rank commanders, however in Caesar their appearance is determined by the purpose of battle narrative. See Ash (2002) p. 261.

<sup>244</sup> 3.20-3.27. See also pp. 92-96 above on Galba, and pp. 164-165 on Quintus Cicero. The specific purpose of individual accounts is evident in the contrast between Sabinus at 5.26-5.37, and how he appears at 3.17-19. See also 6.30-6.31 for Lucius Minucius Basilus.

<sup>245</sup> 5.56-5.58, 6.7-6.8.

<sup>246</sup> 5.26-5.37. Caesar’s representation of the battle is also designed to demonstrate that he was right about the defence of the camp, and to avoid responsibility for the massacre. See pp. 335-339 below. Note also there is criticism of Quintus Cicero at 6.42.1-6.42.2.

responsibility to him. As with the other instances examined, the battle has a specific purpose in directing attention to Caesar's interpretation of the individual described.

The description of Crassus' campaign against the tribes of the Aquitani is a clear example of how Caesar contextualises battle to assign credit to subordinates.<sup>247</sup> This is evident in the motivation ascribed to the forces involved in one battle, which is stated as follows:

Pugnatum est diu atque acriter, cum Sotiates superioribus victoriis freti in sua virtute totius Aquitaniae salutem positam putarent, nostri autem, quid sine imperatore et sine reliquis legionibus adulescentulo duce efficere possent, perspicere cuperent.<sup>248</sup>

In this passage the motivation assigned to the troops is that of performance without the support of the *imperator* or the rest of the army, a self-promotional aim that ostensibly indicates the importance of Caesar.<sup>249</sup> However, the specific reference to a youthful leader is actually a contextual statement that places Crassus in a central role, where his youth is contrasted with the achievements made.<sup>250</sup> Consequently, the campaign should be interpreted as an assessment of his abilities, whether that is his precautions prior to setting out, or his performance in battle.<sup>251</sup> During the campaign he shows clemency, he makes important preparations on siege works and supply, and consults with the troops as required.<sup>252</sup> Eventually Crassus is successful, and the extent of his victory is evident in the catalogue of tribes who submit; similar to the

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<sup>247</sup> 3.20-3.27. Note that this is different to the simple appearance of Crassus in battle at 1.52 where his contribution is important to the battle, but the narrative is not significantly directed towards his representation. See above p. 158. See also Labienus at 2.26 where his intervention is important but the battle focuses on Caesar. Note that attention to subordinates does not conflict with Caesar's own self-promotion, as it still clarifies the importance of the overall commander. See Welch (1998) p. 92; Ramage (2003) p. 363.

<sup>248</sup> 3.21.1.

<sup>249</sup> This supports Caesar's self-promotional objective. See also pp. 239-243 below. See also Labienus at 2.26.5.

<sup>250</sup> Crassus is described as *adulescentulo duce*. This is the only use of the two words together in the text. Note he is also mentioned as giving another harangue at 3.24.5. See Welch (1998) p. 92.

<sup>251</sup> Note how his perspective is adopted, his decision making examined in a similar manner to the Octodurus narrative discussed above at pp. 88-111.

<sup>252</sup> Note clemency at 3.22.1, preparations at 3.21.2, supply and decisions at 3.20.2, and consultation with the troops at 3.23.8.

manner Caesar represents his own victories.<sup>253</sup> The details of the campaign are part of an examination and accreditation of the young commander and the military data provided serves this overall objective.

The account of Labienus and Indutiomarus in Book Five is also designed to highlight the Roman officer's abilities.<sup>254</sup> An attack on the person of Indutiomarus by the forces of Labienus ultimately decides the campaign, and Caesar appears careful to ensure that the overall presentation draws attention to the subordinate's importance.<sup>255</sup> The attack on Labienus' camp is described with very few details except where they impact on his person, an example being the way terrain is described to demonstrate his confidence.<sup>256</sup> Similarly, the reason the Nervii abandon the fight once Indutiomarus falls are unclear, especially considering their previous reputation in combat and Caesar's statement that they intended to attack in any case.<sup>257</sup> By contrast the decision of Labienus to attack the person of Indutiomarus is included, even though the names of those who successfully killed the enemy commander are absent, the importance being the decision of Labienus and the effectiveness of his plan.<sup>258</sup> This selectivity is indicative of the agency given to Labienus at the expense of other details related to battle.

Similarly, in the battle against the Treveri in Book Six, details are provided to credit the stratagem employed by Labienus, which is evident in the description of the plans of each side and the manner in which Caesar describes those elements that indicate how thoroughly successful the plan was.<sup>259</sup> In this account the enemy is described

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<sup>253</sup> 3.27. Crassus effectively takes on a role normally assigned to Caesar, who lists tribes that submitted to him, for example at 2.34, 5.21.

<sup>254</sup> 5.56-5.58. Kraus (2009) p. 167 notes an essential contrast between Labienus and Sabinus. See Welch (1998) pp. 98-101 on Labienus. Rambaud (1966) p. 298 regards Caesar as downplaying the role of Labienus, which is not the case in this account. See also Jervis (2001) p. 160.

<sup>255</sup> 5.58.4.

<sup>256</sup> 5.57.1. See also 5.57-5.58 on Labienus' care to muster cavalry.

<sup>257</sup> 5.58.7. For their reputation see above at pp. 192-204. See 5.56.1 where the Nervii are planning war anyway.

<sup>258</sup> 5.58.6. Contrast Gallic cavalry named at 4.12, discussed below at pp. 309-313, where naming them is important for that narrative.

<sup>259</sup> See 6.7-6.8. Welch (1998) p. 99 notes how Caesar promotes himself in this account, particularly at 6.8.3-6.8.5 where Labienus' exhortation is similar to that of Crassus in mentioning the *imperator*. See also the stratagems of Labienus at 7.57-7.62, where emphasis is on his rationales. He is given *virtus*, and even a speech.

only in general terms and details such as their location are vague in the narrative.<sup>260</sup> In describing the circumstances, only Labienus' plan of feigned flight is communicated, and no mention of important relative strengths of the sides is given.<sup>261</sup> However there is a great deal of precision regarding Labienus and his precautions, such as the deployment of a reserve to guard the baggage.<sup>262</sup> Even the inclusion of the enemy perception achieves this effect, as Labienus' forces are perceived as an *exiguam manum*, establishing the feeling of superiority that the enemy enjoy and an understanding of why they are lured into the trap.<sup>263</sup> Other reasons given for why the Treveri attack are also included to explain why they fall for the ruse, and their impatience at waiting for the Germani, the lure of booty, the size of Roman force and its apparent fear are all described.<sup>264</sup> While this describes enemy objectives, it does so in order to highlight the extent to which the enemy is duped by the Roman commander. The details appear to describe why Labienus is so successful, illustrating that they support the representation of the individual.

The details of battle that are provided all serve to support the successful behaviour of Labienus and the account is summarised, or elaborated in accordance with this prerequisite. The centrality of Labienus is most apparent in the rare inclusion of a pre-battle harangue, which is designed to capture his competency.<sup>265</sup> The speech is given before the men are even in battle formation, according to its place in the narrative, but nevertheless establishes Labienus in the commander's role, not just as formulator of

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<sup>260</sup> For example at 6.7.1 Caesar states that enemy was two days away, and then states they set down fifteen miles away. This does not mean the Treveri moved at 7.5 miles a day, as Caesar is not concerned with the relationship of empirical details. Caesar wants to convey concepts of proximity and countermeasures more than empirical relationships. Note also at 6.7.5 the details of the river are only given when Labienus makes camp. This does not address the defensive nature of the position for the enemy, who may also use it that way. The effect is that Labienus is being careful in using the river, but the enemy are more aggressive.

<sup>261</sup> 6.7.6-6.7.8.

<sup>262</sup> 6.7.4. Note the lack of numbers for the enemy; they are simply a great of force of infantry and cavalry. Precision regarding Labienus' forces in opposition is important as it establishes the care of the subordinate.

<sup>263</sup> 6.8.1. This reference to the Romans is about promoting Labienus, and the emphasis is on the cleverness of his trick and the success with which it works. See also Sabinus at 3.17-3.19, where there are many similarities such as the trickery of the commander, and the complex reasoning of the Gauls.

<sup>264</sup> 6.8.1-6.8.2. Note the summary of the terrain as *iniquo loco* at 6.8.1. There is a major inconsistency not explained by the account, which is why the Treveri wait for reinforcements when they are shown to have overwhelming superiority. Caesar only focuses though on the aspects of the plans that support his objective for Labienus.

<sup>265</sup> Note how Crassus is similarly said to have urged his troops on at 3.24.5 and 3.21.1 While Galba is not given a speech at 3.4, the circumstances there are described to show there was no time before the assault.



the plan, but as the central figure of the short narrative.<sup>266</sup> By contrast once Labienus' plan is successful, Caesar quickly resolves the combat, the enemy flight and even the overall campaign, and the submission of the enemy state is all given together very quickly.<sup>267</sup> The details of the account and even the results of battle are primarily included to recognise the abilities of Labienus, and his measures that lead to the defeat of the enemy. This otherwise brief account nevertheless displays the role of the narrative in creating an impression regarding the individual.

### The Behaviour of Sabinus

In Book Five battle narrative serves a more comprehensive role in generating an impression regarding a subordinate, and the account of the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta is designed to establish blame for the defeat and massacre of Roman forces.<sup>268</sup> While the censure of Sabinus in this regard has been well established, the impact this has on the description of combat has been less studied.<sup>269</sup> Caesar constructs the account of the confrontation to support his overall opinion that the forces left the camp in error, and to show various failures of command by Sabinus.<sup>270</sup> In describing the episode information is provided about the campaign, the forces and their movements, often within the context of an analysis of this individual and his

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<sup>266</sup> 6.8.3-6.8.5.

<sup>267</sup> 6.8.5-6.8.7. Note the sequence. The Germani return home at the flight of the Treveri, not at the submission of the state, associating them closely with Labienus' plan. Note also the similarity of the account to the Octodurus narrative discussed at pp. 101-102 above, where combat focuses on the defeat of enemy expectations as much as the physical circumstances.

<sup>268</sup> 5.26-5.37. Brown (2004). See in particular pp. 297-300. Brown has an excellent analysis of the contrast of this and the Quintus Cicero siege at 5.38-5.52, referred to further below at pp. 335-339. Welch (1998) p. 93, notes how Sabinus is not criticised in the earlier representation of him at 3.17-19, but is held entirely responsible for the massacre. In particular see 3.17.7 for Sabinus' caution in the previous account. Welch also notes how this passage is longer than that used to describe the whole summer's campaigning in Britain. For the massacre see also Powell (1998) p. 116 and Melchior (2004) p. 46. For other criticism of a subordinate see 6.42.1-6.42.2.

<sup>269</sup> Carrington (1939) p. 104 suggests Sabinus was the senior commander and thus responsible. Rosenstein (1990) p. 114-152 discusses how defeat is viewed as an aspect of morality of the commander. This explains how *virtus* could recover a reputation even in defeat. Therefore a defeated commander could attract no criticism if he behaved morally. As Rosenstein notes at p. 116, an example is Flaminius, who is reinstated with aristocratic values in the Livy account, in contrast to the earlier Polybius account. See Polybius 3.84.6, Livy 22.6.2-22.6.4. See Rasmussen (1963) pp. 21-27. Rasmussen examines the speech of Sabinus to show how it emphasises the folly of his plan.

<sup>270</sup> See 5.52.6. Note the singular genitive for *legatus*, establishing it is Sabinus who is blamed. For leaving the camp see pp. 335-339 below, as the account of Quintus Cicero illustrates the correctness of staying. On the relevance of character see Nousek (2004) p. 172.

culpability.<sup>271</sup> As the description of combat reveals, the overall assigning of responsibility, and the account for the battle as a failure of character, is a significant factor in the creation of the battle narrative.

In his description of the overall episode, Caesar's primary objective appears to be the examination of the failed commander. Sabinus is an unreliable character who is described as shouting continually and behaving in an unseemly manner at the council of Roman defenders.<sup>272</sup> The attribution of direct responsibility to Sabinus is also evident as the activity described enforces the contention that Sabinus makes a mistake in leaving camp.<sup>273</sup> In a conference of commanders, Sabinus has his way and follows the invitation of the enemy to leave.<sup>274</sup> Iteration of the length of the baggage train and overall column length as the Romans leave is clearly designed to reinforce the vulnerability of the forces, and the idea that leaving the camp openly exposes them to an attack while on the march.<sup>275</sup> This point of vulnerability is also apparent in the attention given to the behaviour of the soldiers, in particular their attitude towards personal possessions.<sup>276</sup> Caesar describes the men's concern for personal baggage in order to show the risks of leaving camp, as it highlights that men are dangerously close to acting as individuals when poorly led, and are less of an effective fighting entity when travelling with baggage.<sup>277</sup> This concept is specifically reinforced in the description of battle, where the men check the baggage during the fight and add to the confusion as a result.<sup>278</sup> The details of the baggage and personal possessions are included for their relevance to the decision of Sabinus, as they not only describe the men, but highlight the flaws in decision making that are instrumental in the disaster, and are part of the overall censure of the commander.

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<sup>271</sup> Powell (1998) p. 117. Powell states Sabinus is "blackguarded" as the sole author of the disaster.

<sup>272</sup> Powell (1998) p. 118 notes the inappropriate emotion of Sabinus. See *clamitabat* at 5.29.1. See also 5.33.1 for the most dramatic example of fear and lack of judgement. At p. 118 Powell notes Sabinus' response to Cotta is "rabble rousing" when he involves the troops and a 'demagogic punch' in short alliterative phrases. See Powell (1998) pp. 118-119. As Powell notes this type of demagogic behaviour was used by Clodius against Lucullus and the optimates.

<sup>273</sup> See Brown (2004) pp. 296.

<sup>274</sup> On negotiating with the enemy, see p. 336-337 below.

<sup>275</sup> 5.32.2, 5.35.3.

<sup>276</sup> 5.31.4-5.31.5, 5.33.6.

<sup>277</sup> 5.31.4. Note the contrast to Cicero's defence discussed at p. 337-338 below.

<sup>278</sup> 5.33.6.

The failures of Sabinus are also established through the description of combat. Caesar clearly constructs the account to indicate how important correct behaviour is for the result. This is evident in the description of the Roman response to the ambush, which contrasts good and bad behaviour in combat:

Tum demum Titurius, ut qui nihil ante providisset, trepidare et concursare cohortesque disponere, haec tamen ipsa timide atque ut eum omnia deficere viderentur; quod plerumque iis accidere consuevit qui in ipso negotio consilium capere coguntur. at Cotta qui cogitasset haec posse in itinere accidere atque ob eam causam profectionis auctor non fuisset, nulla in re communi saluti deerat, et in appellandis cohortandisque militibus imperatoris et in pugna militis officia praestabat.<sup>279</sup>

The passage concentrates on a contrast in behaviour, rather than the actual steps taken in response to the attack.<sup>280</sup> Sabinus shows no foresight, whereas Cotta has foreseen the result and acts as a commander should.<sup>281</sup> While Caesar mentions such behaviour, he does not state what this actually means, as Cotta may have foreseen the result, but no precautions are actually mentioned.<sup>282</sup> This lack of detail regarding the consequences of their behaviour and activity is due to a focus on how they comport themselves in battle rather than the actual orders and measures taken.

Combat is given a narrative structure in which Sabinus is given instrumentality in determining not only events, but the values on display.<sup>283</sup> The sides are effectively equal, as the Romans are able to resist in spite of the failure of command.<sup>284</sup> However Sabinus negotiates, dies and then the enemy make an attack that is immediately successful, associating his death with the final overrun of the defenders.<sup>285</sup> No explanation is given as to how or why this is able to succeed, when Caesar shows that

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<sup>279</sup> 5.33.1-5.33.3.

<sup>280</sup> Brown (2004) pp. 297-298.

<sup>281</sup> Powell (1998) p. 119 notes not only how Sabinus fails to foresee the ambush, but panics once the fighting starts. At p. 120 Powell asks whether Ambiorix would have said the men “may” be spared in treating with Sabinus. The point is that Caesar is using the words to show Sabinus is selfish.

<sup>282</sup> Caesar does not even define who ordered the army to form up in a circle, stating it was *non reprehendendum* at 5.33.4.

<sup>283</sup> Welch (1998) p. 93, notes how this change in the character from his earlier portrayal at 3.17-3.19.

<sup>284</sup> 5.34.2.

<sup>285</sup> 5.34.3-5.37.4

the Romans are holding their own at this point. The result of battle is hinged on Sabinus' surrender, his death and those commanders he had with him. Caesar further uses anecdotes, in particular *exempla*, to clarify that the Romans are defending courageously, and the narrative describes the fates of individuals who represent Roman courage and *pietas* in the face of hard combat.<sup>286</sup> These men partially redeem the situation through the display of Roman values.<sup>287</sup> Sabinus in the following passage yields to the enemy, a drastic contrast to the behaviour of his subordinates, and the placement breaks the maintenance of Roman ideals with an instance of cowardly behaviour that leads directly to defeat.<sup>288</sup> Following Sabinus' death, the closing description of Cotta dying courageously, the action of the aquilifer in throwing the standard into the camp, and the Roman suicides all fall within this sequence of contrasting behaviour that defines the battle structurally.<sup>289</sup> The frame of reference is a contrast around which the progress of the battle narrative is developed, in order to highlight the character of Sabinus and his instrumentality in the defeat.

This focus on contrasts occurs at the expense of the actual manoeuvre and movement of men. The manner in which the Romans form a circle is not mentioned, nor is the actual nature of the attacks by the enemy described at this stage.<sup>290</sup> The initial enemy attack is stated in terms of what they are attempting to do, attacking the rear and preventing escape, but in response to the Roman circle, the enemy are simply described with the statement that they have a plan.<sup>291</sup> What this exactly means in

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<sup>286</sup> This is why there is no mention of numbers with which to compare the side, as the objective is to create a parity that Sabinus undermines. See 5.35.6-5.35.8. This includes the wounded Cotta, but also men who had served as centurions. Their description at this point appears to be purely to demonstrate the endurance of the Romans and their adherence to values such as *pietas*, as is evident in the description of Quintus Lucanius attempting to save his son. Powell (1998) pp. 120, 122-123, notes that vignettes appear as distractions usually when things are going poorly, however the objective here is more important as it provides contrasts to Sabinus.

<sup>287</sup> Brown (2004) pp. 299-300. 5.35.5-5.35.6. Note there is a corruption at 5.34.2 where the word *pares* is specifically used in *erant et virtute et numero pugnandi pares*. While the use of the term supports this argument, the rest of the text is sufficient to show the concept and the balancing of the battle.

<sup>288</sup> 5.36.1-5.37.3 is particularly important, as Sabinus treats with this enemy, whereas Cotta's response is a short negative at 5.36.3. The sending of an interpreter here is a rare inclusion, but an important reminder of how this is a foreign enemy.

<sup>289</sup> Brown (2004) p. 300. See 5.37.4-5.37.7. Cotta dies with the soldiers at 5.37.4. Powell (1998) p. 121 also calls the tale of the standard bearer "a soothing distraction". See also the representation of Curio in the *Bellum Civile* at 2.42.4-2.42.5. These characters contrast dramatically with Sabinus who is granted no redemptive end.

<sup>290</sup> 5.33. Much is unclear in this battle, such as where the other commanders were. It is not even clear if the battle stopped while the negotiations occurred. However the effect of what is included is important; the submission of the flawed leader equals enemy victory.

<sup>291</sup> *at barbaris consilium non defuit* 5.34.1.

combat is unclear, as Caesar limits his description to general issues of motivation, such as the desire for booty, and the urging of troops to fight hard.<sup>292</sup> The only planning mentioned occurs later in the passage, after the Romans put up resistance, where Ambiorix orders his men to fall back and use missiles in order to wear out the cohorts.<sup>293</sup> The structure of the battle is primarily one of behavioural contrasts, and those aspects of battle that enable a critical assessment of Sabinus, even if this occurs at the expense of the activity undertaken.

The case of Sabinus is an exceptional one, with the narrative structured to focus on his behaviour and personal responsibility for an unusual defeat. However it is part of a pattern in which battle is utilised to encourage Caesar's interpretation of the nature and characteristics of those represented. Information is included to develop impressions, whether that is to introduce the enemy, as is the case with the Helvetii, or to illustrate other qualities such as barbarism. Such details form the foundation of accounts and create an interpretation regarding the nature of enemies like the Belgae and Aduatuci. In the case of the Nervii, the complexity of the representation is at odds with the description of combat, where *virtus* defines the interpretation of battle, but is not fully accounted for through the course of combat. Battle also appears constructed to prioritise the interpretation of individuals, whether these be praised or condemned, and serves an important role in Caesar's understanding of behaviour and characteristics. This role of battle is critical considering that the main character of the *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar himself, is the central figure of the work, and the persuasive role that battle plays in his representation is the focus of the rest of this study.

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<sup>292</sup> 5.34.1-5.34.2. Note also the general construction at 5.34-5.35, which summarises the conditions of battle and the difficulties, but states that the Romans are able to hold on.

<sup>293</sup> 5.34.1-5.34.4.

## CHAPTER FOUR: BATTLE AND THE PROMOTION OF CAESAR

This chapter illustrates that the construction of battle supports a major objective of the *Bellum Gallicum*, the self-representation of Caesar, and that promoting the author and commander is the prime persuasive role of many of these accounts. The self-promotional aim of the work is well established, Osgood arguing that Caesar uses the overall text for political purposes through ongoing self-representation designed to evoke parallels with other great commanders.<sup>1</sup> At a fundamental level this self-promotion is evident in the manner in which Caesar locates himself throughout the work, and the way he structures combat to emphasise his own presence. In battle there is also a relationship between the commander's presence on the battlefield and the resolution of thematic issues, as illustrated in the battles against Ariovistus and the Venetii.<sup>2</sup> However, the case studies of this chapter have been selected as they indicate the extent to which battle narrative is guided by self-aggrandisement, as self-promotional statements do not sit within an otherwise descriptive narrative. A study of the Sabis River battle shows that the objective of structuring the literary turning point of the battle around Caesar's own contribution fundamentally drives the description of combat.<sup>3</sup> Even where the commander is absent, the importance of his presence can be evident, and the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp is analysed to show how the purpose of drawing attention to the commander's arrival determines the structure of the battle.<sup>4</sup> These case studies show that the construction of battle narrative is determined by the objective of maximising the impact of Caesar's personal presence and contribution.

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<sup>1</sup> See Osgood (2009) p. 351. Osgood states that Caesar starts as a Marius averting the threat from the North, then becomes a Pompey "fighting at the colourful edges of the earth" i.e. in strange lands, with strange animals and dark forests. By the end he has set himself up as exemplar of qualities such as *celeritas* and *clementia*. See also Welch (1998) pp. 85-86; Riggsby (2006) p. 207-214; Collins (1952) p. 50; Goldsworthy, (1998) p. 211. While reliant on an essentially reconstructive motive behind battle narratives, Goldsworthy still recognises the self-promotional objective, as does Lendon (1999) p. 277, although Lendon only states battle is "possibly" to show Caesar and his men favourably. Rambaud (1966) p. 5 regards this as integral to the issue of *Tendenz*. See also Ramage (2003) pp. 367-368 on Caesar's virtues.

<sup>2</sup> 1.52, 3.14.

<sup>3</sup> 2.17-2.28.

<sup>4</sup> 5.38-5.51.

The goal of battle narrative is not just emphasis on Caesar's contribution or presence, but also to portray his qualities as commander.<sup>5</sup> This objective is evident in the siege of Aduatuca, where the conflict is described to illustrate his *clementia*.<sup>6</sup> The landing in first invasion of Britain is a more comprehensive example of self-portrayal, where the narrative focuses on the contribution of the commander, with the account structured around the difficulties that the army faces and the manner in which he overcomes these. Another self-promotional objective is evident in Book Seven, which is structured as an ongoing contrast with his opposites in the Gallic command, most notably the Gallic leader Vercingetorix. Throughout Book Seven, the role of battle is to show Caesar's qualities and to draw contrasts favourable to himself, an objective that is particularly apparent in the Alesia passage.<sup>7</sup> As these accounts illustrate, self-promotion is an essential goal and a driving force in battle narrative, as his person and abilities fundamentally determine the structure and content of the passages.

### **The Centrality of Caesar**

Caesar's importance is evident throughout the work as except for some passages on subordinate or enemy activity, the commentaries largely follow the person and actions of the commander through his campaigns.<sup>8</sup> The dominant style of reporting is notable in the first account of battle against the Helvetii, where the narrative is structured in terms of his activity. Following negotiations with the Helvetii, the construction of fortifications to prevent their passage is described as follows:

Interea ea legione, quam secum habebat, militibusque, qui ex provincia convenerant, a lacu Lemanno, qui in flumen Rhodanum influit, ad montem Iuram, qui fines Sequanorum ab Helvetiis dividit, milia passuum decem novem murum in altitudinem pedum sedecim fossamque perducit.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Goldsworthy (1998) pp. 204-212. See also pp. 155-161 above. In the battle against Ariovistus, Caesar addresses the idea of Germanic ferocity, but also his own disregard for their reputation. The narrative proves his assessment to be correct.

<sup>6</sup> 2.29-2.33.

<sup>7</sup> 7.69-7.89. As Nordling (1991) p. 141 notes Vercingetorix can be regarded as one of several "straw men". See also Jervis (2001) p. 171.

<sup>8</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 206 for the centrality of Caesar. Note however that at p. 153 Riggsby argues that the war, rather than Caesar is the focus of the commentary. See also Görler (1976) pp. 99-103 on the narrator/character.

<sup>9</sup> 1.8.1-1.8.2.

The use of the third person singular in this passage is a fundamental feature of the *Bellum Gallicum*, and demonstrative of the centrality of Caesar's character, where it is he who constructs the wall through the instrument of the soldiers.<sup>10</sup> While he captures the essential activity that occurs, as narrator and participant he plays a central role.

The self-promotional objective is also clear throughout the conflict with the Belgae in Book Two, where there is a focus on Caesar as the main protagonist and his response to the enemy forces, even where this sacrifices clarity regarding the course of events.<sup>11</sup> Specifically, orders given to Sabinus only imply that these were successfully carried out, as it is the precaution taken by Caesar that appears important.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, after giving orders to his auxiliaries to go to Bibrax, Caesar does not state what these troops did there, with a whole range of activity omitted.<sup>13</sup> He does not even describe how these auxiliaries made their way back to him to contribute at the main battle, illustrating that units appear and disappear as required by the self-promotional objective, without consideration of some of the more complex issues that underlie their appearance.<sup>14</sup> This is also apparent at the end of the Belgic account, and his involvement in the destruction of the enemy host. As he states of the final slaughter and the Roman return to camp, the Romans performed *ut erat imperatum*.<sup>15</sup> The situational vagaries that underlie the orders are less important than the fact they were ordered by Caesar, the central figure of the commentaries.

Caesar provides another example of combat against the Germani in Book One that illustrates that the battle narrative is primarily shaped to address his own contribution. Here, as the Romans entrench and prepare camps, he describes an attack by the enemy as follows:

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<sup>10</sup> The use of *perducit* here is indicative. See also Kraus (2009) p. 161, who notes that this is not unique to Caesar. On the third person usage see Rüpke (1992) pp. 212. Rüpke regards this as an appropriation from history. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 149-150 and Bömer (1953) pp. 248-249.

<sup>11</sup> See also pp. 71-88 above. See also 5.49-5.51 where the attack from Caesar's camp is described very briefly at 5.51.4. That account has similar problems to Octodurus, discussed at pp. 104-105 above.

<sup>12</sup> Sabinus is sent across the river to fortify the opposite bank at 2.5.6. This is assumed to be done at 2.9.4-2.9.5.

<sup>13</sup> 2.7.1-2.7.3. Caesar only describes the reaction of the enemy to their arrival.

<sup>14</sup> How they return with over 300,000 Belgae in the field, including cavalry, is not explained.

<sup>15</sup> 2.9.6. Caesar at 2.9 generally describes his own leadership and orders, including the appointment of sub commanders. See Octodurus discussed at pp. 88-111 where Galba fulfils this role.



Eo circiter hominum numero sedecim milia expedita cum omni equitatu Ariovistus misit, quae copiae nostros terrent et munitione prohiberent. nihilo setius Caesar, ut ante constituerat, duas acies hostem propulsare, tertiam opus perficere iussit. munitis castris duas ibi legiones reliquit et partem auxiliorum, quattuor reliquas legiones in castra maiora reduxit.<sup>16</sup>

This passage describes a major battle, as it details numbers of forces and dispositions that indicates a sizable confrontation. However, it does not describe the combat at all; the implication of a battle is only evident in the order that two legions repulse the enemy, and their success indicated by *munitis castris*.<sup>17</sup> Two concepts are communicated, that the orders were obeyed and that these led to success, but it is not clear how this actually occurred.<sup>18</sup> The lack of combat illustrates that when Caesar simplifies his account, he can do so in favour of his own contribution, even where this leaves the course of events unclear.

This centrality of the character is particularly evident in the first extended battle against the Helvetii, where the start of the battle gives emphasis to the person and contribution of the commander.<sup>19</sup> As Caesar states of the preparations for combat:

Postquam id animadvertit, copias suas Caesar in proximum collem subducit equitatumque, qui sustineret hostium impetum, misit. ipse interim in colle medio triplicem aciem instruxit legionum quattuor veteranarum; in summo iugo duas legiones, quas in Gallia citeriore proxime conscripserat, et omnia auxilia conlocari, ita uti supra se totum montem hominibus compleret, interea sarcinas in unum locum conferri et eum ab his, qui in superiore acie constiterant, muniri iussit.<sup>20</sup>

In response to the advance of the Helvetians, Caesar orders the Romans to the nearest hill, and sends the cavalry against the enemy. The use of *ipse* to describe his own

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<sup>16</sup> 1.49.3-1.49.5. Caesar summarises a major engagement involving six legions, 16,000 Germani and all their cavalry in this passage. Caesar shows no interest in describing such a large confrontation, or even if one actually occurred, as emphasis is on his order and Roman resilience to fear. For the overall objective see pp. 146-161 above.

<sup>17</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 161.

<sup>18</sup> See also 4.32.2 and 4.34.1-4.34.3 for examples during the first British campaign.

<sup>19</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 63-64. Kraus (2009) p. 161 notes 7.8.1-7.8.4 as an example of third person singular use in order to centralise Caesar.

<sup>20</sup> 1.24.1-1.24.4.

activity is important here as it places the commander on the battlefield and his proximity to the disposition and array of the army.<sup>21</sup> The sequence of *animadvertit, misit, instruxit* and *iussit* are all demonstrative of how the account focuses on Caesar and his activity.<sup>22</sup> The continual reference to his activity or understanding is indicative of how the contribution of his person is an essential aspect of the battle narrative.

The self-promotional objective of the Helvetii account is apparent as events are related in order to associate Caesar closely with the objective of the passage. In Chapter Three it was demonstrated that the account is structured as an introduction to combat with Gallic adversaries, and that the passage concentrates on those aspects of battle that support this purpose.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Caesar also places himself on the battlefield to give emphasis to his own contribution, and the start of the account is in part determined by this objective. This is evident as he places his person where he is most closely associated with the introduction of Romans and Gauls in combat. As he states:

Helvetii cum omnibus suis carris secuti impedimenta in unum locum contulerunt; ipsi confertissima acie reiecto nostro equitatu phalange facta sub primam nostram aciem successerunt. Caesar primum suo, deinde omnium ex conspectu remotis equis, ut aequato omnium periculo spem fugae tolleret, cohortatus suos proelium commisit.<sup>24</sup>

The passage describes the commander's activity just prior to combat, so that he is closely associated with the initial clash. He makes his contribution memorable with the anecdote that he removes all of the horses. He also mentions an exhortation, and how he personally commences the battle.<sup>25</sup> Caesar is therefore closely associated with the first instance of combat in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and given a critical place in the narrative in order to promote his own contribution on the battlefield.

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<sup>21</sup> The reflexive pronoun draws attention to Caesar's personal involvement.

<sup>22</sup> See Nordling (1991) p. 172-174 and Jervis (2001) p. 175 in general.

<sup>23</sup> See above pp. 170-177.

<sup>24</sup> 1.24.4-1.25.2.

<sup>25</sup> *suos proelium commisit* 1.25.2. See Williams (1985) p. 222.

The importance of self-promotion in this passage is clear as the narrative sacrifices details of combat in order to focus on Caesar's presence. As examined in Chapter Three, the cavalry encounter that allowed him time to deploy his forces is summarised briefly, in order to focus on the Roman *pila* volley and its effect on the Gauls.<sup>26</sup> Caesar tells the audience what he does with the cavalry, simply noting their contribution by stating that they are cast back, at which point they disappear from the narrative. He thereby describes his own activity, but not that of the unit that performed an integral role in the historical encounter.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore the cavalry appear as part of a sequence of ablatives absolute that pile preliminary actions together just prior to his personal intervention.<sup>28</sup> The construction of the passage draws attention to the commander and details unrelated to the self-promotional objective are subordinated.

Furthermore, the passage may narrate events out of sequence in order to associate Caesar closely with combat, again demonstrating that the promotion of his own activity supersedes clarity in the overall account.<sup>29</sup> He describes his activity in removing mounts, illustrating that the objective is to describe his own role as inspiration for the men just prior to combat.<sup>30</sup> He has the horses removed, gives the speech to his men, and then orders battle to commence after the enemy have come up *sub primam nostram aciem*.<sup>31</sup> Such activity probably occurred earlier in the historical encounter, in particular the harangue, as it seems unlikely that this activity occurred once the enemy were close.<sup>32</sup> It is also important to note that he exhorts the men after removing the horses, an action which, while plausible, places him on foot and would

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<sup>26</sup> See pp. 170-177 above.

<sup>27</sup> 1.24.1-1.24.2. See also p. 202 above.

<sup>28</sup> 1.24.5.

<sup>29</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 63-64. Williams (1985) p. 222 only notes the self-promotional aspect in the construction of the passage. However Williams is not attempting to determine clarity in regards to the course of the battle narrative.

<sup>30</sup> 1.25.1-1.25.2. It is not denied that such an action could take place, however the inclusion is to show his personal disregard for danger and his relationship to the army.

<sup>31</sup> 1.24.5. While Caesar may have given the order to attack, he is unlikely to have been able to order the individual cohorts to loose *pila*. However, the close association of the order and the volley enhances the relationship of command and orderly action, even though the actual volley would probably have been timed to hit advancing Gauls as they came in range of individual cohorts. The sequence has a clear literary purpose within the structure as the actions of Caesar lend order to the Roman volley, and he appears to act without haste in response to the Helvetian advance. See Hall (1998) p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> On harangues in general, see Marincola (2007) p. 124; Nordling (1991) pp. 136-139; Hansen (1993) pp. 161-162.

have affected his ability to give a speech to the army.<sup>33</sup> All these issues create problems in interpreting the sequence of events and the manner in which the battle unfolded. They nevertheless indicate the purpose of describing Caesar's importance on the battlefield and his personal contribution, sometimes at the expense of clarity regarding the battle itself.

### Thematic Placement of Caesar

Caesar locates his character on the battlefield to promote himself through association with any message he wishes to communicate, and any thematic resolution to the episode. This is evident in two battles examined previously, where he has very specific messages to convey. In the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani, Caesar describes his location on the battlefield in order to associate his presence with the resolution of the question of *virtus* and Germanic martial superiority.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, in the naval battle against the Venetii, he describes his contribution with reference to topography, which is an ongoing concern, so that he is also placed in a strong thematic position when this campaign issue is resolved.<sup>35</sup> While both instances give clear credit for victory to other factors on the battlefield, they are also constructed to promote Caesar, through association of his character with the overall thematic objective.

It was demonstrated in Chapter Two that the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani is constructed to show the superiority of Roman soldiery through a description of close combat. In this account Caesar also describes his own placement in order to associate him with the resolution of this message.<sup>36</sup> He does not emphasise his command role, taking care to state at the start of the battle that he is situated where he thinks the enemy weakest, and presumably where the requirement for martial skill

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<sup>33</sup> On the controversial nature of harangues see Lendon (1999) pp. 292, 298; Hansen (1993) pp. 161-162. Note that in this case, the content of the harangue is not the issue, but its location in the text.

<sup>34</sup> 1.51-1.53. See also below at pp. 222-238 for the Nervii battle, where the account is constructed around the contribution of Caesar.

<sup>35</sup> 3.14.8-3.14.9.

<sup>36</sup> On the theme of *virtus*, see pp. 155-161. See also Ramage (2003) p. 332.

will turn the battle.<sup>37</sup> With the right wing struggling, he describes the turnaround in the following manner:

Id cum animadvertisset P. Crassus adulescens qui equitatu praeerat, quod expeditior erat quam ii, qui inter aciem versabantur, tertiam aciem laborantibus nostris subsidio misit. Ita proelium restitutum est, atque omnes hostes terga verterunt neque prius fugere destiterunt, quam ad flumen Rhenum milia passuum ex eo loco circiter quinque pervenerunt.<sup>38</sup>

Caesar describes Crassus as freer to react; an implication that suggests the commander is busy due to the intensity of the fighting.<sup>39</sup> He is closely associating his presence with the thematic resolution of the battle, even while describing an action instrumental in bringing about victory.<sup>40</sup> In locating himself, and summarising the resolution of the battle this way, it is apparent that combat is structured to place him in proximity to the ideas that the battle communicates, and to maximise his association with this resolution.

A similar objective is evident in the battle against the Venetii. As illustrated in Chapter Two, the battle is constructed to address the resolution of the difficulties of prosecuting the campaign in the coastal regions where the Venetii are located.<sup>41</sup> In this battle the use of the *falx* enables the Romans to board the enemy ships, and Caesar describes his own presence as follows:

Reliquum erat certamen positum in virtute, qua nostri milites facile superabant, atque eo magis quod in conspectu Caesaris atque omnis exercitus res gerebatur, ut

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<sup>37</sup> 1.52.2-1.52.3. Importantly, Caesar includes himself in the ranks of men, being careful to state his own location, so that in any resolution, it has been identified where he specifically was on the battlefield and that he was involved. Note that this does not mean he is manufacturing information, only that his selection of the data is designed to heighten the association.

<sup>38</sup> 1.52.7-1.53.2.

<sup>39</sup> Welch (1998) p. 100. Welch notes that the narrative is constructed so there is no doubt as to Caesar's superior contribution and overall control.

<sup>40</sup> Welch (1998) p. 88 states care was required to ensure a situation didn't arise where the legates shifted attention away from the real hero.

<sup>41</sup> See pp. 126-145 above. Note that Erickson (2002) identifies the theme of the passage as *virtus*. However, the role of Caesar as spectator and his thematic placement on the battlefield is not accounted for. See Oppermann (1933) pp. 37-43, on the role of Caesar being emphasised in the Venetii battle.

nullum paulo fortius factum latere posset. omnes enim colles ac loca superiora, unde erat propinquus despectus in mare, ab exercitu tenebantur.<sup>42</sup>

Caesar includes his own presence ostensibly to describe the effect on the morale of the troops, however it must be noted that such detail is not always included in his battles even where it would be relevant.<sup>43</sup> As character however, he is present in the battle at a thematically powerful point.<sup>44</sup> His presence on a high point recalls the terrain that has proved so instrumental in delaying a resolution.<sup>45</sup> Consequently his presence in such a location places him physically at a locus where a feature that was initially favourable to the enemy now is turned against them, in this case by allowing Caesar to inspire his men and ensure victory at the point where the neutralisation of their sea power occurs.<sup>46</sup> The selection of information supports the self-promotional objective, as it he ensures he is present in a thematically appropriate location.

### **Self-Promotion in the Sabis River Narrative**

Self-promotion can be more thoroughly integrated into a narrative, and in the account of the battle of the Sabis River, the objective of relating Caesar's personal contribution, and making it one of the most memorable aspects of the battle, has a profound effect on the manner in which the battle is presented.<sup>47</sup> Opperman, Brown and even Lendon, who is primarily concerned to show that Caesar is reconstructing the historical event, note that the account is highly self-promotional in objective; however the extent to which the combat passages have been constructed to achieve

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<sup>42</sup> 3.14.8-3.14.9.

<sup>43</sup> Caesar's placement is not entirely unusual, as he often describes his inspirational role, such as against the Helvetii 1.24 and at Alesia 7.88. However he does not always do so, in the battle against Ariovistus at 1.52 the emphasis is on the role that legates and sub-commanders play as witnesses to valour.

<sup>44</sup> See Conley (1983) p. 181. Conley recognises that the battle is won by factors other than Caesar. However, this does not negate his thematic placement. See also Jervis (2001) p. 59.

<sup>45</sup> 3.12.1.

<sup>46</sup> See Erickson (2002) p. 612.

<sup>47</sup> 2.17-2.28. See Nousek (2004) p. 148. Nousek notes the manner Caesar is shown to be in control throughout the narrative. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 206. See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 39-43 on realism. See also Görler (1980) on the narrative objectives.

that objective is illustrated in this section.<sup>48</sup> The battle narrative is extensive, with events described occurring simultaneously across a broad frontage, and the text is devoted to much more than the creation of the worthy enemy examined in Chapter Three.<sup>49</sup> Caesar gives order to this long account so that his personal intervention is given maximum presence and instrumentality in the account. In particular, he uses topographic separation and temporal presentation to enhance the impression of defeat until his intervention.<sup>50</sup> He holds the result in abeyance, building the passage to a climax that centres on his person.<sup>51</sup> The level of detail then increases at the point of his entry into combat to highlight his involvement, indicating the structural importance of self-promotion.<sup>52</sup> The overall idea of victory is not encouraged until Caesar enters combat, so that his personal action is the most memorable and important part of the passage.

The importance of self-promotion is evident as Caesar prepares for the personal role he plays early in the account of the fighting. As he states at the start of hostilities:

Caesari omnia uno tempore erant agenda: vexillum proponendum, quod erat insigne, cum ad arma concurrere oporteret, signum tuba dandum, ab opere revocandi milites, qui paulo longius aggeris petendi causa processerant, arcessendi, acies instruenda, milites cohortandi, signum dandum.<sup>53</sup>

While this passage describes the things he has to do, it also acknowledges the need for personal intervention, by dwelling on the person of the commander and the critical role he plays in the battle.<sup>54</sup> Caesar is critical to so many things, and by stating these

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<sup>48</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 309. Oppermann (1933) pp. 37-43 notes the general self-promotion in the Sabis River account. See more recently Brown (1999) p. 339. See also Lendon (1999) p. 277 for the reconstructive interpretation.

<sup>49</sup> See pp. 192-204 above. The representation of the Nervii and the issue of *virtus* are the other objectives in this narrative.

<sup>50</sup> This is not to say Caesar did not find such factors important in battle. See Lendon (1999) p. 320 and pp. 324-325. However, the narrative has additional objectives than just relating the circumstances of combat and the reasons for victory.

<sup>51</sup> Brown (1999) p. 337. Brown at p. 339 notes how the audience is meant to see Caesar as heroic in the way he turns the battle against the enemy. Jervis (2001) p. 77 notes how extra space is given to difficult battles. Jervis also notes how difficult victories contain a clearly identifiable turning point.

<sup>52</sup> See 2.25.1-2.25.2 for the details just before his intervention.

<sup>53</sup> 2.20.1-2.20.2.

<sup>54</sup> Brown (1999) pp. 336-337.

measures, the need for his future intervention is foreshadowed as the measures indicate his importance in responding to the enemy attack.

One method used to promote the commander is to ensure that the battle is compartmentalised, so that early successes are not highlighted as significant, and the narrative crisis occurs in the place of Caesar's choice.<sup>55</sup> As he states:

Quam quisque ab opere in partem casu devenit quaeque prima signa conspexit, ad haec constitit, ne in quaerendis suis pugnandi tempus dimitteret. Instructo exercitu magis ut loci natura deiectusque collis et necessitas temporis, quam ut rei militaris ratio atque ordo postulabat, cum diversis legionibus aliae alia in parte hostibus resisterent saepibusque densissimis, ut ante demonstravimus, interiectis prospectus impediretur, neque certa subsidia conlocari neque quid in quaque parte opus esset, provideri neque ab uno omnia imperia administrari poterant. itaque in tanta rerum iniquitate fortunae quoque eventus varii sequebantur.<sup>56</sup>

Several impressions are created in this passage. The isolation and disorganisation of the Roman army is evident in the use of *aliae...alia*, and other forms of the indefinite such as *quaque* and *quoque*.<sup>57</sup> The message is that the army is not a single entity, and each legion has to function separately in the battle. This is in contrast to the battle against the Germani, where the army is treated as a whole and legions on the wings are elements of that army.<sup>58</sup> The difference is therefore a narrative choice regarding the level of detail, one that identifies and isolates the legions.<sup>59</sup> The last line however is the most important as it provides a frame of reference for the actions that follow. In this case, the words *itaque in tanta rerum iniquitate fortunae quoque eventus varii sequebantur* contextualise that victory for one legion is not indicative of victory in the

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<sup>55</sup> It is important to note here that the narrative crisis point and the actual crisis in the battle could be synchronous. If the Twelfth Legion broke and ran, this could have been devastating, depending on when this occurred in relation to the return of Labienus' victorious legions. While the actual nature of the crisis is difficult to independently determine, the creation of a narrative directed towards one part of the battlefield is clear.

<sup>56</sup> 2.21.6-2.22.2.

<sup>57</sup> *quam quisque ab pere in partem casu devenit*. 2.21.6. Goff (1984) p. 8 notes that the use of *quisque* rather than *milites* emphasises individuality.

<sup>58</sup> See 1.52.

<sup>59</sup> See 1.52.2, 1.52.6. In the battle against the Germani Caesar simply states that the wing was pressed by the enemy, but does not develop it into a significant crisis in the narrative, merely stating that Crassus reacted to it and sent the third line in.



battle.<sup>60</sup> This passage, as an introduction to the battle, establishes a framework in which Caesar can describe victory, not based on the activities and successes of the army as a whole, but around a crisis point of his own choosing, in this case the legions that come under the heaviest attack.

Importantly, the exact nature of this isolation is unclear and the effect it has is difficult to determine, suggesting that the details are provided more for narrative structure than as an explanation of affairs. While the hedges obscure vision and make it less likely that help will be forthcoming between legions, overall vision seems to be unimpaired in the battle, as commanders and units do actually provide support to each other.<sup>61</sup> At no point do any of the legions suffer through lack of vision, in fact it is sight that causes such a panic among both auxiliaries, and the Twelfth Legion itself, when it begins to be outflanked.<sup>62</sup> Even the sight of Caesar is unimpaired and he does not record any lack of vision that he might have had at the time, as illustrated in his assessment of the status of the Twelfth Legion, which he seems able to see easily.<sup>63</sup> The effect of vision on the battlefield is only felt in the statement itself, and supports the generalised comment that the situation is critical and *in tanta rerum iniquitate*.<sup>64</sup> Even more important is that the hedges do not inhibit movement of any unit, including the attackers.<sup>65</sup> The terrain does not even prevent more complex manoeuvre such as that performed between the Seventh and Twelfth Legion, indicating that the statement is not reflected in the activity on the battlefield.<sup>66</sup> This is not to say that this

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<sup>60</sup> Even Lendon notes that the structure of the account is not conducive to a causal explanation of events. As Lendon states of the episodic quality to the narrative, “This shifting of the camera between these different points of view, combined with the rushing speed of Caesar’s narrative, produces accounts of battle that are highly artistic and impressionistic, series of self-contained vignettes, rapid slide shows rather than movies, where the causal relationship between vignettes is often implied rather than stated”. Lendon (1999) p. 317. Lendon notes that the narrative approach of Caesar does not lend itself automatically to a reconstruction of the battle and the reasons for the way it progressed, due to this highly visual representation of affairs.

<sup>61</sup> This is in spite of the revelation later that vision and the ability of one legion to help another are instrumental in turning the battle around. Labienus sees events clearly at 2.26.4-2.26.5; even Caesar takes in the state of the Twelfth when he arrives at 2.25.1-2.25.2. Sight is very clear at particular moments in the battle. Brown notes the role of the hedges in establishing the warlike nature of the Gauls. See Brown (1999) p. 334.

<sup>62</sup> 2.24.2. Caesar is clear why the followers can see the victorious Tenth Legion, but they can also see back to the camp as well.

<sup>63</sup> See 2.25.1-2.25.2.

<sup>64</sup> 2.22.2. See also Lendon (1999) p. 318.

<sup>65</sup> This is most clear in the initial attack of the Nervii, at 2.19.6-2.19.8 and their ability to form a tight battle line 2.23.4.

<sup>66</sup> 2.26.1-2.26.2.

feature did not have an effect in the historical event.<sup>67</sup> However in accounting for it in the narrative, at no point do the hedges have any effect on movement or in impairing vision.<sup>68</sup> Their effect is intangible, demonstrating that they are used to enhance the atmosphere, the vulnerability and isolation of the legions, and support the idea of a general state which separates and isolates the ability of the army to function as a single entity.

This impression of separation serves to contextualise the victories of the Ninth and Tenth Legions narrated early in the passage, ensuring that their success is isolated on the battlefield and victory is not indicated at this stage of the narrative. As Caesar states:

Legionis nonae et decimae milites, ut in sinistra parte aciei constiterant, pilis emissis cursu ac lassitudine exanimatos vulneribusque confectos Atrebates, nam his ea pars obvenerat, celeriter ex loco superiore in flumen compulerunt et transire conantes insecuti gladiis magnam partem eorum impeditam interfecerunt. Ipsi transire flumen non dubitaverunt et in locum iniquum progressi rursus resistentes hostes redintegrato proelio in fugam dederunt.<sup>69</sup>

This is a clear victory, with success apparent in the manner the legions draw swords, drive the attackers back and pursue them vigorously; however it is applicable just to the two legions, as the qualifier regarding isolation has specified. Even the term *redintegrato proelio* is only relevant to these forces.<sup>70</sup> The terrain qualifier ensures this is only seen as a victory in one spot against one tribe. The overall battle still remains in doubt, and the crisis point occurs at a point later in the account.

More importantly, the success of these legions is followed by a series of events that serve to undermine the effect of the success, as the positioning of less successful action in the narrative indicates:

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<sup>67</sup> The actual battle, not the narrative construction.

<sup>68</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 135 regards vision as critical, but does not reconcile this with the presence of the hedges and the effect Caesar describes that they have on the battlefield. She merely states that Caesar was “fortunate” to see what he did.

<sup>69</sup> 2.23.1-2.23.3.

<sup>70</sup> 2.23.2.

Item alia in parte diversae duae legiones undecima et octava, profligatis Viromanduis quibuscum erant congressi, ex loco superiore in ipsis fluminis ripis proeliabantur.<sup>71</sup>

The passage that describes the success of the Ninth and Tenth Legions involves the use of perfects like *compulerunt*, *interfecerunt* and *in fugam dederunt*.<sup>72</sup> The less certain actions of the Eleventh and Eighth Legions are suspended through the use of the imperfect *proeliabantur*, so that the more problematic activity is ongoing.<sup>73</sup> Their combat is never resolved, so that the initial success is followed by a less definitive encounter. The effect is that any notion of overall success engendered by the earlier passage appears temporally earlier, and the importance of Caesar's intervention for the overall state of affairs maintained in the account.

This pattern continues, as the narrative switches to a description of the right wing where the crisis comes, and provides the most detail of this encounter. As Caesar states:

At totis fere castris a fronte et a sinistra parte nudatis, cum in dextro cornu legio duodecima et non magno ab ea intervallo septima constitisset, omnes Nervii confertissimo agmine duce Boduognato, qui summam imperii tenebat, ad eum locum contenderunt. quorum pars aperto latere legiones circumvenire, pars summum castrorum locum petere coepit.<sup>74</sup>

The use of the word *at* prepares the audience for a setback, qualifying that the successes described earlier are not to be taken as indicative of victory.<sup>75</sup> The return to the perfect does not diminish this impression of temporal linearity, as it is still located

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<sup>71</sup> 2.23.3-2.23.4.

<sup>72</sup> 2.23.1-2.23.3.

<sup>73</sup> It is unclear what order these affairs occurred in during the historical event, or if it is even possible to order them with a simple chronology as the activity of the successful legions must have taken some time, with activity occurring simultaneously. Their relationship to the less certain action of the Eleventh and Eighth legions is unclear.

<sup>74</sup> 2.23.4-2.23.5.

<sup>75</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 131, argues that Caesar is careful to show sequence and chronology correctly in this battle. However Caesar's choice is designed to achieve a literary effect and build towards the crisis. Contrast epic, as noted by Gilbert (2001) p. 24 where sequential narration of temporal events is not so important. Caesar's balancing of historical source and narrative objectives are clearly evident in his order here.

in the text after the first success. Caesar furthermore indicates that this is the most important part of the passage, as he provides details regarding the Nervii designed to make them memorable, including the name of their leader.<sup>76</sup> The Nervii are given more character than any other element on the battlefield, including a leader who is only mentioned now. The use of *omnes* is also relatively superfluous, but nevertheless helps to create an image of size and strength.<sup>77</sup> The additional detail ensures that the early successes on the battlefield are subordinated in the passage and the engagement of the audience quickly shifts to the events where the crisis occurs and where the commander personally appears.

In order to understand that the battle is structured for self-promotion, it is important to examine how the camp and the baggage of the Romans are presented.<sup>78</sup> By understanding the inconsistent representation of both, it is then possible to see their role in the narrative and Caesar's structure for the battle. The baggage and camp appeared to play an important role in the historical account, a role that is consistent with the importance it plays in other battles, particularly regarding morale.<sup>79</sup> However the status of the camp in the Sabis River account is ambiguous, and shifts as necessary to support the self-promotional objective of Caesar. In this regard, Caesar establishes the importance of the baggage and camp prior to the battle when he describes the plans of the Nervii.<sup>80</sup> Based on incorrect intelligence they have received, the Nervii intend to attack the Romans as soon as their baggage train appears, and they assume this will result in them cutting off and isolating the first legion, to the dismay of the other legions following.<sup>81</sup> What Caesar does not explain is why the Nervii do not react to the fact that six legions appear before the baggage even arrives, and while it may be possible to construe reasons for their failure to react, what is critical is that there is little mention of the huge difference between plan and actuality, except to say that the

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<sup>76</sup> *omnes Nervii confertissimo agmine duce Boduognato* 2.23.4.

<sup>77</sup> If accurate, that would be up to 50,000 Nervii as stated at 2.4. It may therefore be a hyperbolic statement of numbers.

<sup>78</sup> 2.23.4-2.23.5.

<sup>79</sup> See 5.33 for men deserting standards to protect their baggage, and also see 1.26 for the ferocity with which the Helvetii defend their baggage.

<sup>80</sup> 2.17.2-2.17.4.

<sup>81</sup> 2.17.2-2.17.4.

Nervii attack on the signal they had originally planned.<sup>82</sup> There is no assessment because the concern is only to highlight the importance of the baggage to the enemy, and the course that the battle follows when they attack the camp.

Another important aspect of the battle that is not explained is the status of the camp itself. Caesar refers to the enemy plan as predicated on attacking the first legion in marching order before it has actually fortified the location.<sup>83</sup> The use of *castra* here indicates an incomplete fortification, as the attack is to be launched immediately.<sup>84</sup> When the Nervii attack, he states the following:

Interim legiones sex, quae primae venerant, opere dimenso castra munire coeperunt. ubi prima impedimenta nostri exercitus ab iis qui in silvis abditi latebant visa sunt, quod tempus inter eos committendi proelii convenerat, ita ut intra silvas aciem ordinesque constituerant atque ipsi sese confirmaverant, subito omnibus copiis provolaverunt impetumque in nostros equites fecerunt.<sup>85</sup>

The passage gives the impression that the Romans have only just started work; the sentence on fortification is followed immediately by the attack. The rhythm of the narrative suggests a lack of time and work has only just begun, which is consistent with a sudden unexpected attack or ambush. However, as described later, work had been commenced, as the men leave their workstations to form up for the attack.<sup>86</sup> The camp does not seem to be complete at this part of the narrative.

This problematic status is apparent as Caesar later describes the camp as not just a place on the battlefield, but as if it were complete. The camp is described as possessing gates, the *decumana porta*, and serving as a refuge for the retreating auxiliaries, suggesting that it is more than merely some marked out ground.<sup>87</sup> The

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<sup>82</sup> 2.19.6. Note that they may have been unable to alter their plans, but Caesar does not feel compelled to address a major disparity between plan and actuality, leaving the audience to interpret the Nervian lack of flexibility.

<sup>83</sup> 2.17.2. The idea the fortifications are not complete is because it is the legions who seem to be the ones who do the fortifying. See 2.19.5-2.19.6.

<sup>84</sup> 2.25.2.

<sup>85</sup> 2.19.5-2.19.7.

<sup>86</sup> 2.21.6.

<sup>87</sup> 2.24.2. The camp is a refuge, suggesting this must be more than just the location where the gates will go.

Nervii also make for it in the battle as if it were an important objective.<sup>88</sup> How the camp was completed when the men left the work to commence battle is not explained, and even the reserve legions could not have done the work as they only arrive at the end of the battle.<sup>89</sup> This lack of clarity regarding the status of the camp is evident throughout the narrative, as Caesar never specifies how complete the fortifications were. Consequently there are two potentially conflicting representations of the camp, the one early in the narrative, that is only just being fortified, and the one during the battle that has a physical presence and value as an objective for both sides.

A similar problem is evident in the depiction of the baggage. The arrival of the baggage is the signal for the Nervii to attack, suggesting that it is only just appearing on the battlefield when they advance, and Caesar makes no mention of a delay between the arrival of the baggage and the attack of the Nervii.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless the *calones* have time to enter the camp, although the baggage train at this point still seems to be in transit.<sup>91</sup> Importantly, the Treveri later relate that the baggage has fallen with the camp; giving the impression the baggage and camp are to be treated similarly.<sup>92</sup> While the apparent inconsistency could be explained if the Nervii only see the baggage train as it enters the camp, Caesar does not specifically state this even though it would be simple to do so. He does not trace its movement on the battlefield and ambiguity is therefore present in both the description of the camp and the baggage.

This confusion in the representation of the camp and baggage is clearly explained by the purpose that they play in self-promotion, particularly the camp itself. In the early stages of the battle Caesar appears to emphasise the speed of the Nervii and to present the battle as one where the Romans are caught by the unexpected attack.<sup>93</sup> The

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<sup>88</sup> 2.23.5, 2.24.3-2.24.4.

<sup>89</sup> See 2.26.3.

<sup>90</sup> Note that the attack of the Nervii and the impression of speed in the narrative are not disharmonious if the intent is to capture the effect of surprise. However it should be noted that there is an immense impression of speed 2.19.6-2.19.8, in spite of the actual time it would have taken to cross the river. Caesar is clearly hyperbolic when he states they seemed to be in all places at one time, and his intent does not seem to just be descriptive.

<sup>91</sup> See 2.24 in general for the *calones*.

<sup>92</sup> 2.24.5.

<sup>93</sup> 2.19.6-2.19.8. See Brown (1999) p. 336 who examines the passage where the Nervii attack, to show how the language is used to represent speed and irresistible force. The camp and baggage have been specified as the objective of the enemy, and the Nervii are represented as aggressive raiders. See p.

impression that the site is only just being fortified suits this presentation, as the attack appears to occur as soon as the Romans arrive, making it seem like an ambush and suggesting the idea of defeat in the early stages of the narrative. Nevertheless, as the passage progresses the camp appears to add tension to the narrative by presenting a vulnerable objective and target of the enemy. The actual military vulnerability is not disputed; however the narrative status is important, as it is being used to support the impression that the successes of the Ninth and Tenth legions are not indicative of victory.<sup>94</sup> These uses maintain the result of the battle in the balance until the intervention of Caesar. The narrative purpose however is most notable in the final stages of the battle where the camp and baggage disappear. They do not even feature in the final stand of the Nervii, who are described at one point as filling it up with their men.<sup>95</sup> Once these features serve their literary purpose they disappear. The actual state of the baggage and condition of the camp is never clear, and is not intended to be clarified, as they evoke the idea of Roman defeat, and entertain various concepts of vulnerability prior to Caesar's intervention in the narrative.

Once the Nervii are shown to reach the camp, the passage approaches the crisis of the battle, and Caesar describes the flight of the Treveri in a clear attempt to build the narrative towards the point of his own intervention. To do so, he describes a statement made by them that is not even within the temporal and physical framework of the battle:

Quibus omnibus rebus permoti equites Treveri, quorum inter Gallos virtutis opinio est singularis, qui auxilii causa a civitate missi ad Caesarem venerant, cum multitudine hostium castra nostra compleri, legiones premi et paene circumventas teneri, calones, equites, funditores, Numidas diversos dissipatosque in omnes partes fugere vidissent, despera tis nostris rebus domum contenderunt; Romanos pulsos

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166 above. This impression might be undermined if the Nervii appeared to hold back for a considerable time. When the camp suddenly appears more complete in the battle, this also suits the idea that the Nervii would naturally make for it as they would be after booty. An apparent descriptive inconsistency is explained when the representation of the enemy is the criteria for judging the narrative.

<sup>94</sup> 2.23.4-2.23.5.

<sup>95</sup> 2.24.3-2.24.4. Lendon (1999) notes this problem p. 319.

superatosque, castris impedimentisque eorum hostes potitos civitati renuntiaverunt.<sup>96</sup>

According to this passage the Treveri flee the battle and return home, thereby placing their actions outside the battlefield, and probably even later than the date of the battle.<sup>97</sup> However, their flight encapsulates ideas of defeat as not only do they notice the camp filled with the enemy, but in their description of the battle as lost, they give final place to the camp, giving an impression of an army that is almost beaten.<sup>98</sup> As Steinberg notes of fiction “As the straight chronological order of presentation is the most logical and hence natural arrangement, any deviation from it is clearly an indication of artistic purpose”.<sup>99</sup> The activities of the Treveri in their homeland may therefore fall outside the scope of the actual battle, but are brought into the narrative as they entertain the idea of defeat at this point.

Importantly, the extension of the temporal and geographic framework of the account enables Caesar to further develop the idea of a narrative crisis point. The report of the Treveri enables a battlefield summary to occur from the perspective of internal witnesses who are frightened and shaken participants.<sup>100</sup> The Treveri appear to be almost omniscient, and are able to summarise what is wrong across the entire battlefield.<sup>101</sup> They do not mention the success of the Ninth and Tenth Legions, and mainly focus on the beleaguered Twelfth and the camp.<sup>102</sup> The Treveri are given a broad but highly selective perspective, as this summarises the battlefield at its worst. This account is a highly artificial part of the battle narrative, as it describes affairs that are selective and most likely occurred after, or away from the battlefield, in order to enhance the idea of a looming disaster.

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<sup>96</sup> 2.24.4-2.24.5.

<sup>97</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 132 omits this temporal anomaly.

<sup>98</sup> 2.24.3-2.24.5. Steinberg (1993) p. 33. Note that the representation of the Treveri, while interesting of itself, is directed at a specific narrative objective regarding Caesar.

<sup>99</sup> See Steinberg (1993) p. 33.

<sup>100</sup> Brown (1999) p. 335 believes that Caesar refers to the courage of the Treveri sarcastically. This is possible, but whether they are courageous or not, their statement is presented in order to be refuted through action.

<sup>101</sup> Caesar has nevertheless clarified that vision was severely restricted by the hedges.

<sup>102</sup> Also the role of the Treveri provides a spoken statement of Roman defeat that Caesar can later address through the action of the narrative. In this context, the actions of Caesar immediately following the Treveri's words are critical as they are a refutation of those statements, and his actions should be seen as counter to their opinion. See also the boast of Ariovistus at pp. 146-149 above.



The importance of the passage is apparent as Caesar follows it immediately with a return to his own activity, so that his appearance in the narrative occurs when the situation is described at its most dire.<sup>103</sup> Immediately following the passage on the Treveri, he returns to the point in the battle before the Tenth legion has crossed the river, so that he can describe himself setting out from encouraging them and as he approaches the most problematic part of the field.<sup>104</sup> The sequence of events has been narrated out of temporal order with regard to the activities of the Tenth, as he has already related that they were ultimately successful.<sup>105</sup> This temporal backtracking occurs in order to follow Caesar's course across the battlefield towards the point of the crisis.

Caesar describes his arrival at the Twelfth Legion and relates its imminent collapse to invite contemplation of the scene as he witnessed it. The level of detail is included to establish the danger of the situation:

Caesar ab decimae legionis cohortatione ad dextrum cornu profectus, ubi suos urgeri signisque in unum locum conlatis duodecimae legionis confertos milites sibi ipsos ad pugnam esse impedimento vidit, quartae cohortis omnibus centurionibus occisis signiferoque interfecto signo amisso, reliquarum cohortium omnibus fere centurionibus aut vulneratis aut occisis, in his primipilo P. Sextio Baculo fortissimo viro multis gravibusque vulneribus confecto, ut iam se sustinere non posset, reliquos esse tardiores et nunnullos ab novissimis desertos proelio excedere ac tela vitare, hostes neque a fronte ex inferiore loco subeuntes intermittere et ab utroque latere instare et rem esse in angusto vidit neque ullum esse subsidium, quod submitti posset.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> 2.25.1.

<sup>104</sup> This is an instance where Kagan's argument is particularly problematic. Kagan presumes that the Twelfth fought later than the Tenth, an impression brought about by the narrative structure. See Kagan (2006) p. 133. Steinberg's understanding of temporal manipulation appears more applicable in this instance. See p. 232 above. The complexity of a narrative capturing simultaneous activity, in conjunction with the self-promotional objective, also explains the temporal confusion.

<sup>105</sup> See 2.23.1-2.23.3. Caesar also repeats the activity of the Nervii. They crossed the river at the start and made for the camp, and then they do so again later in the narrative. Although not strictly a duplication, Caesar is forced by his construction to include them twice at 2.19.6 and 2.23.4, as he is of his own actions at 2.21.4, 2.25.1.

<sup>106</sup> 2.25.1-2.25.2.

As Brown states, this passage is exceptionally long, a monumental sentence and the longest in the commentaries.<sup>107</sup> The level of detail is designed to establish the idea of an imminent collapse, with a mix of information on the general circumstances, individual and unit losses, and even the inclusion of the *exemplum* Baculus.<sup>108</sup> All the items encapsulated by the frame of *vidit...vidit* effectively enclose the narrative so that Caesar's perception is intense at this point.<sup>109</sup> The audience is being invited to perceive the battle as he saw it, to gauge and consider his possible reaction to these events, just prior to the point where he takes personal action on the battlefield.<sup>110</sup> As he states, the matter is *angustus*, a clear comment on how this point should be viewed.<sup>111</sup> The narrative narrows its focus tightly on the affected legions, to capture the extent of the danger and prepare for Caesar's intervention with a vivid picture of the need for action.

Caesar adopts a highly selective approach to the information that he describes in this passage, qualifying his perspective at the time of the battle with additional information to that he would have witnessed at the time.<sup>112</sup> He mentions specific casualties, such as the number of centurions lost, focussing on the Fourth Cohort in particular. While details such as the loss of a standard bearer might be obvious as he comes upon the Fourth Cohort, and he might even be aware of the loss of the centurions there, he claims knowledge that almost all centurions in the legion have been killed or wounded, something unlikely to be known unless an ongoing casualty

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<sup>107</sup> Brown (1999) p. 337.

<sup>108</sup> See the Helvetii battle and the *pila* volley 1.25.2-1.25.5. See Webb (2012) p. 12. See also De Jong (2007) p. 10 for general comments on the rhythm of a passage. As De Jong notes p. 517, Barthes called this effect "*l'effet de réel*" which Webb also discusses. See Melchior (2004) p. 20. Melchior notes that the number of centurions fallen is used to show the intensity of combat. A good contrast to this passage is 2.23.1-2.23.4 where the success of Labienus and the Ninth and Tenth legion is only briefly described in spite of the idea they fight an extended battle down, across the river and into the enemy camp.

<sup>109</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) p. 82. On focalization, see above on Octodurus at pp. 88-111. On style see Eden (1962) p. 110. See also 4.32.1-4.32.4 for Caesar's limited perception in a battle in Britain. See also generally Grillo (2011) pp. 243-253 on narrative style.

<sup>110</sup> Conley (1983) at p. 176 notes that the men are still *cunctantes* after his intervention. For Conley, Caesar is not the decider, and argues at p. 177 that Baculus is a character who "not only shares in the glory, but whose role is so dramatic that it arguably overshadows Caesar's own". While Baculus is certainly memorable, he performs no deeds in themselves, and his placement within the overall structure actually draws attention to the need for Caesar's personal intervention.

<sup>111</sup> See the role of Baculus below pp. 233-235 and 2.25.1-2.25.2 where *angustus* is used.

<sup>112</sup> Kagan (2006) pp. 132-133 presumes he would have seen the Ninth and Tenth Legion crossing the river at this point. Kagan does not appear to fully account for the shifting of limited perspective and narrator's role. To Kagan, if Caesar does not describe it, he did not see it at the time.

report was being provided to him.<sup>113</sup> What appears likely is that Caesar has added to his original impression information received after the battle, to support the picture of imminent disaster he comes across.

The narrative includes the use of Baculus as an *exemplum* in a representative capacity that illustrates that attention is drawn to the state of affairs as the commander arrives on the scene. While scholars like Kagan see vignettes like this as adding colour, Baculus serves a more direct literary purpose in directing attention to the desperation of the situation.<sup>114</sup> Baculus, like the legion, has taken many wounds in the same manner the legion has lost many centurions. Most importantly he is not described as out of the fight so that his ambiguous status as wounded and not quite able to stand is also representative of the overall situation.<sup>115</sup> While the threat that the legion will soon fall is evident as Baculus is not able to stand, he has not yet fallen, as is evident in *ut iam se sustinere non posset*.<sup>116</sup> His uncertain state places the situation in a state of flux as the commander arrives, and raises the possibility that the matter is not yet decided. It is important to note that Baculus' role in the narrative is primarily a representative one, his contribution being not particularly noteworthy otherwise. While his wounds are clearly extraordinary, the activities that led to him being wounded, or the hazards that centurions endure are not described. His heroism falls in the past, and outside the narrative itself, just as the legion itself has reached this state prior to Caesar's arrival. Baculus' role is an indicator of what has transpired previously, an effective literary device as it alludes to the ferocity of events Caesar has excluded from his narrative. In this case, the description of Baculus also paves the way for a turnaround and demonstrates that he not only personifies the status of the legion, but prepares the audience for a turning point in the narrative. Baculus is therefore integral to the portrayal of the battle, as he is a manifestation of the status of the legion, while also an anecdote that foreshadows the turnaround caused by Caesar's intervention.

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<sup>113</sup> See Kagan (2006) p. 135 who only deals with the general status of the legions that Caesar saw and does not mention the casualty lists provided. Contrast Grillo (2011) pp. 244-249 on the omniscient narrator.

<sup>114</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 122 calls elements like this description at the "subtactical" level designed to add colour to a descriptive narrative of what Caesar regarded as important. As argued in this study, these elements are the important feature, as they are narrative choices that illustrate Caesar's objective for the passage. Brown (1999) pp. 337-378 notes how Baculus features in several of Caesar's battles, engaged in heroic action. See also Gerlinger (2008) p. 157, Richter (1977) p. 128.

<sup>115</sup> 2.25.1. While *virtus* may be implied, and is probably encouraged, *virtus* only informs the meaning of the account as addressed above at pp. 192-204. It is only one of the purposes of his appearance as he has a more direct narrative role regarding Caesar.

<sup>116</sup> 2.25.1.

Caesar's intervention is an entry into combat which contrasts dramatically with the action so far. He visualises his own advance and central role in the reversal of circumstances as follows:

scuto ab novissimis uni militi detracto, quod ipse eo sine scuto venerat, in primam aciem processit centurionibusque nominatim appellatis reliquos cohortatus milites signa inferre et manipulos laxare iussit, quo facilius gladiis uti possent. cuius adventu spe inlata militibus ac redintegrato animo, cum pro se quisque in conspectu imperatoris etiam extremis suis rebus operam navare cuperet, paulum hostium impetus tardatus est.<sup>117</sup>

With the rearmost men retiring from the fight Caesar's actions are contrasted as he advances, so that the audience follows his person moving forwards as the first positive action at this critical point.<sup>118</sup> As Brown states, "The climactic moment is Caesar's entrance into the thick of the fray, which the audience is encouraged to view not simply as prudent but heroic, an extension of the courage demonstrated by Baculus and the other killed or wounded officers, into whose shoes Caesar must step in order to avert a general collapse".<sup>119</sup> His personal advance stands in dramatic contrast to the threatened flight as the first positive steps taken towards overall victory.

There is no rush to turn the battle around quickly and the change starts with the least effective positive steps, building towards the tactically important with emphasis on the centrality of the commander. Caesar states of his personal effect on the Twelfth Legion that the attack of the enemy is only slowed, the use of *tardatus est* at the end of the passage holding events in the balance.<sup>120</sup> He then stabilises the Seventh Legion so that *paulatim sese legiones coniungerent* and, *audacius resistere ac fortius pugnare coeperunt*.<sup>121</sup> The impression is of a great force slowly being resisted, an image

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<sup>117</sup> 2.25.2-2.25.3.

<sup>118</sup> For temporal issues see Gerlinger (2008) p. 39.

<sup>119</sup> Brown's comment is actually a discussion of how Caesar must have had bodyguards and adjutants with him, but the point is still relevant, that Caesar takes a personal role at the crisis point. See Brown (1999) p. 339.

<sup>120</sup> 2.25.3. The idea of the enemy being slowed is important considering the numbers described.

<sup>121</sup> 2.26.1-2.26.3.

consciously created through the sequence of events and use of *paulatim*.<sup>122</sup> Like the forces of the Belgae in Book Two, the enemy is a mass that in this case can only be shifted slowly.<sup>123</sup> The passage only then switches to the external events such as the arrival of the reserve legions and the intervention of Labienus, so that from the centrally focused point, movement flows out to the peripheral activity. The construction establishes Caesar as the locus from which victory arises, to centralise on his person this change on the battlefield.

Caesar then narrates other factors that affect recovery of the battle, from perspectives that maintain the centrality of his own position. Following the recovery of the Seventh and Twelfth Legions, he relates the events that had an effect on the course of the battle.<sup>124</sup> He describes the arrival of the baggage legions, and as he states that the enemy sees them on the highest point, he clarifies their military importance of the arrival and the effect on morale.<sup>125</sup> However the location of Labienus, who also observes the action around Caesar, serves more than a geographical purpose, as it balances the high point on which the other reinforcements are seen.<sup>126</sup> The audience is encouraged to view the commander and the struggle in a centralised position even though it is unclear where exactly this stage of the battle is being fought, whether it is at the camp or nearby.<sup>127</sup> The perspective of this activity maintains Caesar's centrality, so that his importance is maintained even as the narrative describes the rest of the battlefield.

It is important to note that the passage also recognises the features that actually turned the historical battle around, and the presentation balances a literary crisis centred on Caesar, with the events considered important for victory. The return of Labienus is important as it allows the Nervii to be attacked from several directions, and Caesar shows that he considers this critical when he states: *horum adventu tanta rerum*

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<sup>122</sup> The use of *paulatim*, to indicate a gradual and piecemeal turnaround works in conjunction with *tardatus est* above.

<sup>123</sup> See pp. 71-88 above on the multitude topos, noting the importance of visualisation through the smoke of the campfires discussed at p. 74. Visualisation is important to capture the size of the forces involved.

<sup>124</sup> 2.26.1-2.27.3.

<sup>125</sup> 2.26.3-2.26.4.

<sup>126</sup> *summo collo* is used at 2.26.4.

<sup>127</sup> Labienus may see the situation in the camp, as the Nervii were described by the Treveri as in the camp; however the relationship between camp and the location of the legions is unclear.

*commutatio est facta*.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless literary emphasis is given to Caesar's own position on the battlefield when he states:

Et Labienus castris hostium potitus et ex loco superiore, quae res in nostris castris gererentur, conspicatus decimam legionem subsidio nostris misit. qui cum ex equitum et calonum fuga, quo in loco res esset quantoque in periculo et castra et legiones et imperator versaretur, cognovissent, nihil ad celeritatem sibi reliqui fecerunt.<sup>129</sup>

This passage initially provides some tactical information for Labienus' decision, who acts when he sees the camp being overrun. However the objectivity of the first statement is qualified with words such as *quanto...periculo*, and the accumulation of detail, through *et castra et legiones et imperator*.<sup>130</sup> The use of *imperator* is particularly important, as it establishes Labienus' relationship to his commander, and ensures that when the subordinate rushes back, he does so largely of personal loyalty and concern. The sequence of evidence, danger, recognition and then action creates force, with the impetus driven by the view of the commander at the heart of combat. The structure in this instance focuses on factors that establish Caesar's importance even while describing other activity that is instrumental in victory.

The Sabis River narrative is one of the longest battle narratives in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and much of the complexity of the narrative is driven by the promotion of Caesar's personal contribution, and the creation of a literary structure that focuses on his importance on the battlefield. While he recognises important aspects of the battle in his account, the extent to which it is developed around the importance of the commander is evidence of the self-promotional role that it plays. Apparent inconsistencies or temporal and geographical problems with the battle can be reconciled through consideration of this objective, and the importance that self-aggrandisement plays in the construction of the narrative.

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<sup>128</sup> 2.27.1.

<sup>129</sup> 2.26.4-2.26.5.

<sup>130</sup> The repetition of *et* is important for linking the camp, the legions and the person of Caesar.

## Caesar's Importance in the Quintus Cicero Siege

Even where Caesar is not physically present in a battle narrative, self-promotion can be apparent in the manner in which the account emphasises his importance. His character is absent from much of the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp described in Book Five, until his arrival causes the enemy to break off the siege and engage in an unsuccessful encounter against the relieving force.<sup>131</sup> Caesar consequently structures the narrative to demonstrate the timeliness of his own arrival, holding matters in abeyance until he arrives to resolve them.<sup>132</sup> The passage is constructed as a series of measures and countermeasures, so that the possible result is unclear, and when Caesar arrives, attention is drawn to the instrumentality of his intervention.<sup>133</sup> As Brown notes, Caesar's centrality is continually asserted throughout this episode, and this explains the relative absence of Cicero, or his perception, from a narrative about his own activity.<sup>134</sup> This is a marked contrast to the Octodurus narrative where Caesar has no influence, and indicative that when he can portray a battle to emphasise his own contribution, the fundamental structure can be affected.<sup>135</sup> While his arrival probably did secure victory in the historical event, the content of the battle is chosen specifically to maximise his importance as the critical factor in ensuring success.

Caesar establishes that the camp is entirely cut off, and in desperate need of rescue, so that it is clear that his arrival is essential for the successful resolution of affairs. There is no mention in this account of any possibility that the defenders might hold out independently, and details such as the logistics of the enemy staying in the field are omitted entirely.<sup>136</sup> Instead the isolation of the camp is stressed, as indicated by the

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<sup>131</sup> 5.38-5.51. Brown (2004) p. 302 notes it is the *consilium* of Caesar that is stressed. See also pp. 304-305. See also Welch (1998) pp. 96-97. Welch notes political considerations regarding the representation of Quintus Cicero. See also Labienus, Crassus and the men performing as if Caesar was there 3.21.1, 6.8.3-6.8.5. See also Ramage (2003) p. 353 fn. 65 on Caesar's absences, and 7.6.3-7.6.4 where Caesar states his fears of the army having to fight without him. See below pp. 260-276 for his centrality in Book Seven.

<sup>132</sup> See Jervis (2001) pp. 159-161. See Ramage (2003) pp. 335-337 on the general use of the word *adventus*, which also seems applicable here.

<sup>133</sup> While Caesar's arrival clearly brings about a change in affairs as the Gauls abandon the siege, the objective of emphasising this role is evident in the preceding structure of the account.

<sup>134</sup> Brown, (2004) p. 304-305.

<sup>135</sup> See pp. 88-111 above, and pp. 280-281 on Octodurus.

<sup>136</sup> The enemy numbers 60,000 by Caesar's account, a significant number to hold in place while besieging a camp. However there is a lack of defined enemy numbers at the start, which are only implied by the scope of the siege works at 5.42.4-5.42.5. They are not mentioned until later, so that

description that the roads are blocked.<sup>137</sup> Anecdotal details furthermore stress the desperation of the situation, such as the great rewards offered to messengers for getting through, and even the mention of the torture of those messengers.<sup>138</sup> Throughout the episode, words are used to indicate a defence that is barely holding on, with descriptions that use *aegre*, or statements that the defenders' ability to fight are pushed to their limits.<sup>139</sup> Even Cicero is described as barely holding on, thereby providing an illustrative example of the desperation of the situation.<sup>140</sup> Such details are given early in the account, and while the defence continues for more than seven days, the opening passages establish the core concept of a situation held in the balance, and one that cannot continue indefinitely. The passage establishes through the desperation of the matter and the clear indication of isolation, the importance of Caesar and his arrival for the rescue of the camp.

Caesar describes the defence to evoke the idea of measure and countermeasure, and activity is paired in order to hold the result in abeyance until his arrival. The idea is evident from the start, as the enemy rush to surround the camp, which is countered by the men rushing to the ramparts and the preparations for the defence.<sup>141</sup> The extent to which the idea of a stalemate is conveyed is evident as the timeframe advances to the seventh day of the siege, without reference to specific activity on each day, so that the contrast of besieged and besieger is the major notable feature of this period.<sup>142</sup> Most importantly, the state of balance is indicated by the *quanto...tanto* clause below:

Quanto erat in dies gravior atque asperior oppugnatio et maxime, quod magna parte militum confecta vulneribus res ad paucitatem defensorum pervenerat, tanto crebriores litterae nuntiique ad Caesarem mittebantur.<sup>143</sup>

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any ability to determine a potential outcome is not possible in the initial stages of the battle. It is at 5.49.2 that the numbers are given.

<sup>137</sup> 5.40.1-5.40.2.

<sup>138</sup> 5.45.1-5.45.2.

<sup>139</sup> 5.39.4, 5.40.3-5.40.6.

<sup>140</sup> 5.40.7.

<sup>141</sup> 5.39.3.

<sup>142</sup> 5.43.1. See 5.40.2-5.40.5. This is evident in the statement *a nostris eadem ratione qua pridie, resistitur. hoc idem reliquis deinceps fit diebus* at 5.40.3-5.40.4. This describes a general state of affairs that persists for the duration of these days.

<sup>143</sup> 5.45.1.



As is apparent, the difficulties faced are not in themselves indicative of success or defeat, but only the escalation of severity that lends urgency to the need for Caesar. Matters are held in abeyance with no indicator of an outcome, and the battle is interpreted as in a state of stalemate that draws attention to Caesar's instrumentality to change affairs.

In one instance the siege is created as a purely narrative stalemate, as it contrasts activities and characteristics that are not direct countermeasures. Caesar states that on the seventh day a fire catches hold of the camp, detailing the effect that this has, and how this encourages the enemy to launch an assault.<sup>144</sup> He does not describe the combat at this point, instead describing the valour of the Roman troops in not seeking their possessions.<sup>145</sup> One aspect of the battle, the attack, is contrasted with an anecdote, the lack of concern for baggage, so that the quality of the troops, rather than the course of the fighting is described.<sup>146</sup> The contrast of values with activity is also evident in the following passage which describes an enemy tower that the Romans destroy:

Hic dies nostris longe gravissimus fuit; sed tamen hunc habuit eventum, ut eo die maximus numerus hostium vulneraretur atque interficeretur, ut se sub ipso vallo constipaverant recessumque primis ultimi non dabant. paulum quidem intermissa flamma et quodam loco turri adacta et contingente vallum, tertiae cohortis centuriones ex eo quo stabant loco recesserunt suosque omnes removerunt, nutu vocibusque hostes si introire vellent vocare coeperunt; quorum progredi ausus est nemo. tum ex omni parte lapidibus coniectis deturbati turrisque succensa est.<sup>147</sup>

It is clarified at the start that the result is inconclusive, demonstrating the importance of establishing the stalemate for the audience. The details provided then assist in contextualising that stalemate, and why no result is forthcoming for the enemy. Caesar even mentions the rebukes of the centurions, in order to provide an illustrative example of the quality of the troops. Such a contrast of activity against troop qualities shows that the passage supports the general principle of the stalemate, as differing

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<sup>144</sup> 5.43.1-5.43.7.

<sup>145</sup> 5.43.4-5.43.5.

<sup>146</sup> Brown (2004) p. 302. See p. 338 for further discussion of this passage.

<sup>147</sup> 5.43.5-5.43.7.

elements are used to withhold any foreshadowing of the result until the commander's arrival.

The most important indicator of the stalemate is the anecdote of two centurions, Lucius Vorenus and Titus Pullo, who illustrate the inconclusive nature of the combat in their endeavours. Following the above description of centurions Caesar continues to the behaviour of these two individuals, who advance beyond the fortifications to settle who is the better soldier.<sup>148</sup> While their role is further examined in Chapter Five, their presence appears as a representative anecdote regarding the overall situation, as the two men display courage and support each other, kill several enemy, but return to the fortifications with the question of who is better unresolved.<sup>149</sup> Caesar specifically states: *...neque diiudicari posset, uter utri virtute antefendus videretur.*<sup>150</sup> The incident clearly encapsulates the objective of the battle, to describe an inconclusive state of affairs that maximises the impact of his arrival in the narrative.

Caesar also provides information of limited importance to the course of combat in order to stress the importance of his own arrival. There is a great amount of information included about communication attempts from the camp, such as the name of the Nervian who provides a messenger and the message carried on a dart.<sup>151</sup> The level of detail is indicative of the importance attached to contacting the commander.<sup>152</sup> However, a similar level of detail is provided regarding a return message to the camp, and Caesar describes that he sends a message by dart to tell Cicero that help is on its way, and that the message is conveyed in Greek letters.<sup>153</sup> Such anecdotal data is indicative of the narrative objective, where details draw attention to his relationship to the defenders, and his status as rescuer of the camp.

However, such details have only a superficial relationship to the battle itself. According to the narrative the message conveyed by dart stays on a tower for two days untouched, so that the defenders are unaware of the communication from

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<sup>148</sup> 5.44.1-5.44.14. This is a technique used in the battle of the Sabis River to describe a crisis point in the battle. See pp. 233-234 above.

<sup>149</sup> 5.44.14. Brown (2004) p. 293. See p. 338 below.

<sup>150</sup> 5.44.14.

<sup>151</sup> 5.45.2-5.45.5.

<sup>152</sup> Caesar follows this with several chapters on his efforts to reach the siege. 5.46-5.48.

<sup>153</sup> The weapon is a *tragula* 5.48.2-5.48.10.

Caesar.<sup>154</sup> As described, the message is not found until just before the relief of the camp two days later, suggesting it is of limited importance to morale and the course of events. Attention is clearly given to an incident that stresses the importance of his arrival, at the expense of details regarding the defence, which continue in the interim for those two days.<sup>155</sup> While his arrival secures success in the siege, the effect on the narrative is substantial as he prepares for his intervention.<sup>156</sup> The self-promotional aspect is a fundamental feature of the structure and presentation of this battle, where Caesar is given an important centrality over and above his intervention in the historical event.

### Caesar's *Clementia* and Aduatuca

The specific characteristics that Caesar wishes to portray are a fundamental element in the manner in which a confrontation is portrayed.<sup>157</sup> Such an objective has been noted by scholars such as Ramage, who has catalogued the virtues displayed throughout the work in general.<sup>158</sup> However this section illustrates that this promotional objective can play a major role in the manner battle is constructed, through an examination of the siege of Aduatuca, where the account focuses on Caesar's *clementia*, sometimes to the exclusion of a clear understanding of the circumstances of battle.<sup>159</sup> The promotion of this characteristic fundamentally affects the manner in which the siege is constructed, illustrating that it has a significant impact on the narrative.

In the siege of Aduatuca *clementia* is an important issue, one that is developed in the ongoing description of the enemies of Book Two. In the description of Bratuspantium, tropes such as suppliant women and children aid in illustrating Caesar's mercy, as

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<sup>154</sup> 5.48.7-5.48.9.

<sup>155</sup> 5.48.3-5.48.10.

<sup>156</sup> Note the victory itself is covered from 5.49-5.51.

<sup>157</sup> Kraus (2009) p. 169 notes that the extent of self-promotion can be very broad across the text. This section specifically examines a battle that is developed to highlight one characteristic. See Jervis (2001) pp. 161-162, 174. On *clementia* see Ramage (2003) pp. 350-351. See also Oakley (1997) pp. 115-116 on Manlius and *clementia*, in Livy 7.9.6-7.10.14. Note that in spite of Caesar's references, *clementia* is a characteristic not identified by Cicero *pro Leg Man* 28.

<sup>158</sup> Ramage (2003) p. 364. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 205-206.

<sup>159</sup> 2.29-2.33. See Riggsby (2006) p. 75. Osgood (2009) p. 351, notes generally how Caesar utilises the work to set himself as an exemplar of *clementia*. See also 2.14.5, 4.15.5 of the Usipetes and Tencteri, another instance where Caesar is particularly harsh to the enemy, yet the narrative mentions his mercy. As Lee (1969) p. 103 states of that account "Caesar's *clementia* has the last word". See also Powell (1998) p. 130 who notes the lack of real *clementia* in the *Bellum Gallicum*.

their pleas are answered when he spares the town.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, the sparing of the women, children and old men among the Nervii is specifically mentioned, supporting the idea that he is attempting to communicate the quality in that account.<sup>161</sup> In the case of the Aduatuci, there is a dramatic contrast as the whole town is ultimately sold into slavery, however Caesar nevertheless continues to reference *clementia* in the account, stating of the Aduatuci plea: *unum petere ac deprecari: si forte pro sua clementia ac mansuetudine, quam ipsi ab aliis audirent, statuisset Aduatucos esse conservandos, ne se armis despoliaret*.<sup>162</sup> As examined in Chapter Three, the Aduatuci are portrayed as warlike and belligerent, thereby presenting a situation in which any form of mercy could be understandably denied.<sup>163</sup> The Aduatuci nevertheless appeal to *clementia*, attempting to misuse it to keep their arms, and in his reply Caesar refers to his practice of granting mercy as part of his own custom, whether an enemy deserves it or not.<sup>164</sup> More importantly, he mentions that he secures the town specifically to keep the inhabitants safe from his own men.<sup>165</sup> Motivations are assigned to the combatants based on the expectation of *clementia*, allowing Caesar to utilise the account to draw attention to his quality in this regard.

In conveying the quality, the circumstances of historical battle may have been simplified, indicating that this objective supersedes clarity regarding the original event. Caesar admits in this passage that he must protect the Aduatuci from harm, and why this is so is not specifically mentioned.<sup>166</sup> The Romans have not had to assault the town, and by Caesar's terms there is no direct reason for harm to be expected based on the circumstances of the siege.<sup>167</sup> This lack of an explanation could result

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<sup>160</sup> 2.13.2-2.13.3. See Ramage (2003) pp. 343-344.

<sup>161</sup> 2.28.1-2.28.3.

<sup>162</sup> 2.31.4-2.31.5.

<sup>163</sup> See pp. 184-192 above.

<sup>164</sup> 2.32.1-2.32.4. Caesar reminds the audience of his treatment of the Nervii in this statement. See 2.28.3.

<sup>165</sup> 2.33.1-2.33.2.

<sup>166</sup> 2.33.1-2.33.2.

<sup>167</sup> As Caesar states at 2.32.1-2.32.2 he will accept surrender *si priusquam murum aries attigisset, se dedidissent*. The reason the enemy attack is not made clear, if they are actually overawed by the siege works of the Romans and believe they are divinely guided. Note that in the battles fought of this year, there seems to have been little possibility of booty for the soldiers directly. The defeat of the Belgae was against their rearguard, and their towns capitulated without assaults. While the Nervii camp was actually taken, they had removed their people, and presumably their valuables to safety. It is therefore entirely possible that Caesar had some problem controlling his men at this point due to issues of payment. See Riggsby (2006) p. 205 on the neglect of booty, also Collins (1972) pp. 938-939. See also Nordling (1991) pp. 197-200.

from there being other issues regarding control of his men; however he only describes the information that highlights his own quality.<sup>168</sup> In doing so, he may have omitted information, as his objective is to promote his own characteristic even when it may conflict with other details.

The lack of clarity in favour of self-promotion is evident in Caesar's own response to an enemy attack. He holds back any reference to his suspicion that the enemy may attack, the implication of his actions being that he accepts the surrender of the Aduatuci at face value.<sup>169</sup> Only once they have attacked does he reveal he was prepared for such an event, so that the battle narrative maintains a sense that Caesar has given the enemy the benefit of the doubt.<sup>170</sup> The account of the siege of Aduatuca illustrates that the purpose of the narrative is to address the quality of *clementia*, and the account balances such an objective against the requirement to present other qualities and details of the battle.

### The Commander in the First Invasion of Britain

The description of the first invasion of Britain is a specific example where Caesar uses battle narrative to convince the audience of his qualities as commander and in this case, the greatness of his achievement.<sup>171</sup> In this account, contextual details such as the requisitioning of ships and nautical references are used to call attention to Caesar's precautions and his care as commander in the face of the challenge of this unprecedented venture.<sup>172</sup> Specific qualities on display, such as *scientia* and *rei militaris* are evident in the account of the preparations and the crossing to Britain.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> At the siege of Avaricum at 7.17 Caesar is clear that it is the men who take vengeance on the town. See pp. 291-297 below.

<sup>169</sup> 2.32.4-2.32.4.

<sup>170</sup> Caesar has to balance the quality of *clementia* with good generalship. This passage has the effect of enhancing Caesar's qualities as commander by showing he is prepared. See also the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri pp. 309-313 where he balances these two qualities in a similar way. See also 7.11 for his foresight in anticipating the flight of refugees across a river.

<sup>171</sup> See 4.23-4.26 for the landing. See also Welch (1998) p. 85 who notes the purpose of the work in general is to present Caesar as the great Roman imperator. This representation of Caesar is complimentary with the view of Jervis (2001) p. 164.

<sup>172</sup> 4.20-4.24. See Jervis (2001) p. 166. On the idea of *res gestae* see Ramage (2003) pp. 362-363. See Schadee (2008) pp. 171-172 on novelty.

<sup>173</sup> See Cicero *pro Leg Man* 28, for the virtues of a commander *scientia*, *rei militaris*, *virtus*, *auctoritas*, *felicitas*. Note that this section does not address these qualities directly, as the purpose is primarily to

However his most notable presence is as commander in battle, and in the landing at the beach details of combat are selected to demonstrate the obstacles he faces, and how he overcomes these, so that the account places emphasis on his achievement.<sup>174</sup> In his final summation he shows how important communication of the achievement is, and that combat details are part of a pattern of self-promotion where the battle is rated against his other successes.

The historical expedition to Britain was a novel, unusual venture that must have excited the imagination of a Roman audience, something Caesar would have been well aware of when he constructed his account.<sup>175</sup> Welch notes that soon after the expedition Catullus used Caesar as image of “romantic distance” and by his own admission, the activity of this year, including the crossing, earned him a twenty-day celebration in Rome, a greater accolade than that achieved for his general activity in 57 BCE, and the same celebration as that given after the battle of Alesia.<sup>176</sup> With these celebrations mentioned, it is reasonable to expect that the rest of the account would be influenced by the desire to capture the unprecedented and challenging nature of the task undertaken.<sup>177</sup> In particular, the account of battle and the attendant circumstances could be expected to capture his personal contribution and suitability for this great venture.

Caesar makes clear his concern that the account reflects personally as an achievement, as he makes excuses when a challenge is not overcome. In particular, his failure to decisively defeat the enemy at the beachhead is a major concern, and he states: *neque longius prosequi potuerunt, quod equites cursum tenere atque insulam capere non potuerant. hoc unum ad pristinam fortunam Caesari defuit.*<sup>178</sup> Here Caesar describes a missing aspect of battle, the failure to pursue, which is due to the lack of cavalry. The mention of failure is important as he is willing to discuss an apparent problem in order

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determine the role of the battle narrative; however at least two of the qualities are certainly on display.

<sup>174</sup> See Adcock (1956) p. 38 on the reception objective.

<sup>175</sup> Note the proposed epic of Quintus Cicero, who was on Caesar’s staff. See Nousek (2006) p. 45 and Allen (1955) for a general examination of the epic.

<sup>176</sup> See 2.35.4, 7.90.8, 4.38.5. See Welch (1998) p. 86, and Catullus *Carm* 11.

<sup>177</sup> Welch (1998) p. 85 notes the competition with Pompey as an important factor in this account.

<sup>178</sup> 4.26.5. On *fortuna* as a virtue see Ramage (2003) pp. 357-358.

to reflect on his overall level of success.<sup>179</sup> His final assessment that it is the one thing missing from his usual fortune is an indicator of how he wishes to portray this as one of his achievements. In this regard, the qualities of the commander, and the self-promotional objective, can be expected to be reflected in the battle.

### The Challenge of the Unknown

Caesar utilises the contextual details and background to emphasise the unusual challenges he faced and to enhance the idea of the invasion as an expansion of Roman endeavour. This is evident as he develops the idea of the expedition as one into an unknown and distant land, and the focus of contextual information is on the absence of information about the enemy and terrain. As he states:

Quae omnia fere Gallis erant incognita. neque enim temere praeter mercatores adit ad illos quisquam, neque iis ipsis quicquam praeter oram maritimam atque eas regiones, quae sunt contra Galliam, notum est.<sup>180</sup>

This passage describes the lack of anything except a superficial understanding of the island.<sup>181</sup> However, by the time of writing Caesar had visited the region, and could have provided information if his desire was to fully contextualise the forthcoming battles. This style continues throughout the account, so that when he reports the activity of the scout Volusenus, he never actually states what the man found out, ensuring that an air of mystery remains regarding the nature of the terrain and people encountered.<sup>182</sup> Contextual information is deliberately withheld regarding the conditions in order to establish and evoke the idea of the unknown.

The most important area of intelligence kept from the audience is the name of the enemy faced, an omission that enhances the idea of a venture into the unknown. There

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<sup>179</sup> Caesar's account also fits with Melchior's revenge dynamic, and how the absence of vengeance demands an explanation. See Melchior (2004) p. 19.

<sup>180</sup> 4.20.3-4.20.4.

<sup>181</sup> Rice Holmes recognises that Caesar may have known more than he cared to admit. See Rice Holmes (1911) p. 163. Krebs (2006) pp. 117-118 also notes a form of intellectual mastery as part of this account. Note that Caesar appears to have this knowledge by the time he wrote 5.12-5.14, as he describes the island in more detail.

<sup>182</sup> For Volusenus see 4.21.9, 4.23.5.

is no information provided on tribal names or confederacies, and the enemy is simply introduced as *hostium copias armatas* prior to the landing.<sup>183</sup> This is in marked contrast to the building up of enemies such as the Helvetii, Germani and Nervii, and is an omission that is indicative of Caesar's flexibility, in this case the withholding of information to create an impression.<sup>184</sup> Nowhere in the account of the actual landing does he identify these forces, who continue to be described as *hostes* or *barbari*.<sup>185</sup> The impression is of an unknown antagonist, not even identified as *Britanni* in the account and its antecedent activity.<sup>186</sup> This lack of definition is an artifice designed to keep their identity unknown, as Caesar reveals after the battle that these were the same tribes who had earlier sent hostages to him.<sup>187</sup> Consequently, the omission of their names appears deliberate in order to evoke the idea that the commander is venturing into unknown lands.

Furthermore, Caesar does not indicate the strength of the enemy, most importantly with regard to the number of men faced, and the absence of such empirical data illustrates his concern with impressions rather than figures. This is reflected in the total absence of enemy numbers in the account, for both the initial force that await him on the cliff tops, and the numbers that opposed the actual landing.<sup>188</sup> Even after the battle no figures are given regarding the dead or total enemy present, so that no assessment of the actual level of difficulty faced can be extrapolated from his account.<sup>189</sup> This disregard for the numeric aspect of the landing shows that Caesar is not attempting to provide an empirical military assessment, but is inviting his audience to imagine, and possibly even to exaggerate the numbers and the level of resistance they offer, in order to establish the idea of this venture as a notable achievement.

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<sup>183</sup> 4.23.3.

<sup>184</sup> See Chapter One pp. 61-62 on the Helvetii, Chapter Two pp. 146-161 on the Germani, and Chapter Three pp. 192-204 on the Nervii.

<sup>185</sup> 4.23.3, 4.24.1, 4.24.3. (*illi*), 4.25.2, 4.25.4, 4.26.2, 4.26.5, 4.27.1. Tribal names are not given until the second invasion.

<sup>186</sup> See 4.21.5 where Caesar only uses the word *Britanni* once, when discussing the activity prior to his embarkation. The inhabitants are merely the enemy, rather than a distinguishable set of tribes. At 5.20 Caesar mentions the Trinobantes as coming to him on the mainland of Gaul, so names are held back for an entire book.

<sup>187</sup> 4.27.5-4.27.6.

<sup>188</sup> See 4.23-4.24.

<sup>189</sup> There is no casualty report for the enemy. For a contrast, see the Usipetes and Tencteri, where Caesar uses numbers to indicate how successful his surprise attack was. See 4.15.3-4.15.4. Note also how he uses casualties among the Nervii to indicate the intensity of their last stand. For the Nervii see 2.28.1-2.28.3.



Details regarding the enemy are only given when they evoke ideas of novelty and difficulty. Caesar mentions that the enemy cavalry and chariots oppose the landing, providing a reference to a novel method of warfare that has not been described in the Gallic battles.<sup>190</sup> However the absence of numbers is important as it gives the audience neither the ability to empirically assess the intensity of this opposition at the beach, nor the ability to assess the potential success of such opposition.<sup>191</sup> More importantly, the ability of chariots to function on this terrain is debatable, and what these men do once they reach the beach is never mentioned.<sup>192</sup> Their inclusion mainly evokes the idea of the unusual, without discussion of actual performance in battle. Furthermore, Caesar appears to include details that specifically illustrate the opponent's native status. The enemy is able to enter the shallows and attack the Romans with missiles, action that is attributed to their familiarity with the region and the training of the horses.<sup>193</sup> While horses may be trained to function in the surf and the statement is tactically relevant, the enemy's knowledge of the region seems less relevant, particularly in the treacherous and changing conditions of a beach.<sup>194</sup> The unusual is picked out for inclusion, enhancing the foreign nature of the venture and the idea of a novel accomplishment for the commander.

This is not the only content selected for the purpose of addressing the novelty of the situation for a Roman audience. When Caesar describes a flanking move by the warships in the landing, he describes a significant factor, as the effect is to force the enemy to retire.<sup>195</sup> However he describes the effect on morale in the following way:

...naves longas, quarum et species erat barbaris inusitatio et motus ad usum expeditior, paulum removeri ab onerariis navibus et remis incitari et ad latus apertum hostium constitui atque inde fundis, sagittis, tormentis hostes propelli ac

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<sup>190</sup> Caesar makes no mention of chariot use by the Gauls in his narratives. See Adcock (1956) p. 53 on novelty, Riggsby (2006) p. 57 on chariots.

<sup>191</sup> No relative data is forthcoming to rate numerically the two sides. Chariots are mentioned in the landing, but an assessment of their combat ability is withheld to later in the account at 4.33.

<sup>192</sup> If Rice Holmes is correct in stating that the landings occurred between Deal and Walmer, the beaches in this region are made of stones on which chariots would struggle to function, assuming the basic material of the beaches are the same as they were at the time of the invasion. See Rice Holmes (1911) p. 155.

<sup>193</sup> 4.24.3-4.24.4.

<sup>194</sup> Rice Holmes (1911) p. 158 notes they may have trained for the surf in preparation for the invasion.

<sup>195</sup> The enemy retire at 4.25.2-4.25.3.

submoveri iussit. quae res magno usui nostris fuit. Nam et navium figura et remorum motu et inusitato genere tormentorum permoti barbari constiterunt ac paulum modo pedem rettulerunt.<sup>196</sup>

While missile weapons are described as effective, the passage twice describes the unfamiliarity of the enemy with the ships and equipment used.<sup>197</sup> This statement is problematic considering the maritime status of these peoples. These were tribes familiar with the coast and presumably accustomed to oar power, even if it was not used in the style of Roman warships.<sup>198</sup> In this instance the issue of morale appears selective, as it reminds the audience that this is a new adversary not encountered previously, and therefore draws attention to the unprecedented nature of the commander's actions.

Terrain is also included when it highlights the unusual and challenging nature of the expedition. Caesar notes that the enemy in the initial landing place is able to cast missiles from the cliff tops to the shore, information that is provided to show why a landing is not attempted at that spot. However it is helpful only in defining the place as an obstacle that has to be circumvented, there being no actual fighting that takes place there.<sup>199</sup> By contrast, the description of the actual landing place is very brief, merely summarized as *aperto ac plano*, and no further details are provided, in spite of the fact that this is where the battle takes place.<sup>200</sup> Topography is described in detail only when it poses an obstacle to be met and overcome, in order to illustrate the magnitude of the task undertaken by the Roman commander.

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<sup>196</sup> 4.25.1-4.25.3.

<sup>197</sup> Note that the appearance of the ships and oars had no effect before or at the start of the battle from 4.21.1-4.21.2.

<sup>198</sup> Caesar claims these peoples had aided the Venetii and Gauls, and clearly had familiarity with ships and traders at the very least. See 3.8-3.9 for their role in the war with the Venetii, and 4.21.5-4.21.6 for the traders.

<sup>199</sup> 4.23.3-4.23.4. Note that it is unclear where this might have been. There is no mention of white cliffs, which could indicate the lower heights to the North of Dover. However these do not have the steep characteristics that are a feature of the white cliffs and Caesar's account. If they were the white cliffs, Caesar's omission is remarkable and indicative of a very tightly focused form of self-promotion, where geography is only referenced for its specific relevance. In general, Caesar omits reference to geographic features except for rivers, or where they have defensive characteristics related to his narrative objectives.

<sup>200</sup> 4.23.6. Note that in stark contrast to the depth of detail in tides and times in the crossing, Caesar has none of these at the beach and does not describe any conditions there. Importantly he omits tides, which are important for a landing, and other aspects such as winds.

## Knowledge of Military Affairs

In the face of the challenges of the invasion and the impression of a venture into the unknown, Caesar utilises the details of campaign and battle to communicate his knowledge of military affairs, in particular his diligence, care and caution as commander.<sup>201</sup> Information given at the start of the campaign that is necessary to understand military context, such as the forces used, fall within a sequence regarding the delegation of command, as he is careful to stress his attention to the preparations.<sup>202</sup> As the statement *quicquid praeterea navium longarum habebat, id quaestori legatis praefectisque tribuit* illustrates, the presence of warships is given as part of the delegations.<sup>203</sup> Caesar's concern with his own precautions is clear as the subordinates mentioned play no later role in the account, and the delegations are of no importance for understanding the course of events.<sup>204</sup> These details can be seen to primarily address his competence in facing the unusual challenge that the expedition posed.

More importantly, Caesar reveals that it is the adequacy of his preparations, not the military data itself that is the purpose of this information. Prior to the invasion he gives some details of the ships he procures, being particular to note he has around 80 transports, enough, as he confirms, to carry across about two legions. As he states: *navibus circiter LXXX onerariis coactis, contractisque quot satis esse ad duas transportandas legiones existimabat...*<sup>205</sup> In this statement the concern is to establish that he thought the number of ships enough, and demonstrates that he uses the logistical background to focus on his own diligence.<sup>206</sup> Contextual information

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<sup>201</sup> See Suetonius *Div Jul* 58.1.1-58.1.5. *Diligentia* is not specifically used here; however the general idea of diligence is communicated. See Ramage (2003) p. 334. See above pp. 246-246 fn. 174 on *rei militaris*.

<sup>202</sup> See 4.22.3-4.22.6. See also pp. 319-335 below on the second invasion.

<sup>203</sup> 4.22.3. See also 4.22.5-4.22.6 as he includes his delegations in Gaul in this sequence.

<sup>204</sup> Note how the warships are instrumental at 4.25.1 but the commanders are not mentioned. By contrast, in Book Five Caesar mentions at 5.2.3-5.2.4 the number of warships for the second invasion when discussing preparations i.e. 600 transports, 28 warships.

<sup>205</sup> 4.22.3.

<sup>206</sup> Caesar is careful in his preparations to describe how he ordered Gaul before leaving, which is a demonstration of diligence; as such dispositions are not relevant to further activity by the delegated commanders. See also 5.24, 5.25. Note the similar use of numeric details at 1.29, where the Helvetian census, as a found document of numbers, demonstrates the excellence of Caesar's own investigations. See also 1.31, where the numbers of Germani, while of limited relevance for the battle, show Caesar's informed generalship. See pp. 50-51 above.

regarding the forthcoming battles is clearly there to illustrate his ability to undertake the venture and promote his capacities as commander.

The details given, in particular his plans for the invasion, also suggest through their lack of specificity that they are only concerned to reflect Caesar's personal ability to pursue the venture. He provides no details of his plans regarding potential landing places, and does not explain why he approached an initially unsuitable place except for an implication it was closest to Gaul.<sup>207</sup> Similarly, after the first location proved problematic, the lack of specific detail regarding his plans is evident in his orders to his sub-commanders:

Interim legatis tribunisque militum convocatis, et quae ex Voluseno cognovisset et quae fieri vellet ostendit monuitque, uti rei militaris ratio maximeque ut maritimae res postularent, ut, quam celerem atque instabilem motum haberent, ad nutum et ad tempus omnes res ab iis administrarentur.<sup>208</sup>

As the repetition of *quae...quae* shows, Caesar is more concerned to stress that he gave commands to his legates and tribunes, than to explain what exactly he communicated.<sup>209</sup> Moreover he makes clear his knowledge of naval affairs when he mentions the inconstancy of the sea; however the emphasis is on his own ability to understand the problems and give orders to account for them.<sup>210</sup> This vagueness regarding the details of actions taken is because the actions, not the details are self-promotional, and communicating his competence is the governing condition behind the inclusion of command decisions.

Caesar displays a similar selectivity regarding other references that indicates his concern with how his command is perceived. His disinterest in empirical data is evident as he does not give the distance from Gaul to Britain at this stage, but withholds this information until the second invasion.<sup>211</sup> While he gives indicative travel times, the absence of such details suggests how little he is concerned with

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<sup>207</sup> 4.21.3-4.21.4. Caesar intends his audience to consider the cliff location as a potential landing place as is evident from his description of the defensive potential. See 4.23.2-4.23.4.

<sup>208</sup> 4.23.5-4.23.6.

<sup>209</sup> The attribute of *consilium* is noted by Ramage (2003) p. 337.

<sup>210</sup> 4.23.5-4.23.6.

<sup>211</sup> See pp. 319-321 below.

describing the physical parameters of the invasion.<sup>212</sup> Even the seven miles that he states was the distance from the cliffs to the actual landing point is of limited significance, as it only locates the second point from the first.<sup>213</sup> While marginal in terms of context, these details show attention to logistics that are characteristics of a good general, at least according to Polybius.<sup>214</sup> In addition, there is an attention to the passing of time:

... ipse hora diei circiter quarta cum primis navibus Britanniam attigit ...

Hunc ad egrediendum nequaquam idoneum locum arbitratus, dum reliquae naves eo convenirent, ad horam nonam in ancoris exspectavit.<sup>215</sup>

Both passages feature descriptions of time, an important aspect of co-ordinating the invasion of which Caesar appears aware.<sup>216</sup> As these passages indicate, he uses such details to communicate the impression of diligence. That they have no direct relevance to combat is indicated as there is no mention of time once the fighting commences, and they are abandoned in the battle narrative.<sup>217</sup> While the approach appears somewhat selective with regard to distances and times, it does so because its purpose is not to define the tactical landscape. The details are provided to show his concern with precision and reconnaissance, abilities that best demonstrate his competence as commander of the expedition.

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<sup>212</sup> 4.23.1-4.23.2. At 5.2 he finally gives distance for transit continent to Britain from the Itian port as 30 miles.

<sup>213</sup> 4.23.6.

<sup>214</sup> Polybius describes these aspects of command at 9.12-9.16. He pays particular attention to issues such as navigation. Also see for tides and times see *BG* 4.23.1, 4.23.4-4.23.5. 5.8.1-5.8.4. Caesar shows a Polybian attention to detail i.e. time, tides, weather in the first invasion of Britain, which is to be expected of a naval invasion, but his selectivity in regards to information is directed at his own abilities. See also to a lesser extent the second invasion, which addresses the problems of the first as discussed at pp. 319-321 below.

<sup>215</sup> 4.23.2, 4.23.4-4.23.5.

<sup>216</sup> Caesar is also clear that he arrives with the first ships, demonstrating how he took a personal interest in the intelligence gathering at 4.23.2-4.23.3.

<sup>217</sup> In particular, the depth of the water at the beach is not related to tidal issues, and the time Caesar arrived at the beach is not described. See 4.23.6.

### The Landing as *Res Gestae*

Having established the unprecedented nature of the invasion and his own suitability to lead it, Caesar describes the landing as a sequence of challenges that further enhance the extent of the achievement and the glory involved. He openly states at the start of the battle that this is particularly challenging, by making the problems of landing the subject of his introduction to combat. As he states:

Erat ob has causas summa difficultas, quod naves propter magnitudinem nisi in alto constitui non poterant, militibus autem ignotis locis, impeditis manibus, magno et gravi onere armorum pressis simul et de navibus desiliendum et in fluctibus consistendum et cum hostibus erat pugnandum, cum illi aut ex arido aut paulum in aquam progressi omnibus membris expeditis, notissimis locis audacter tela conicerent et equos insuefactos incitarent. quibus rebus nostri perterriti atque huius omnino generis pugnae imperiti non eadem alacritate ac studio, quo in pedestribus uti proeliis consuerant, utebantur.<sup>218</sup>

In this description, a series of obstacles to landing are supposed, including the depth of the water, and the ability of the enemy to hurl weapons at the Romans as they struggle ashore. These are challenges that must be overcome for the landing to be successful, rather than a description of the actual movement of the men ashore. Caesar is therefore quite clear in his objective, and starts the battle with the challenges of a naval assault rather than an explanation of actual activity in order to support the idea of the venture as a noteworthy deed.

The attention to the challenge comes at the expense of coherence regarding the sequence of events. In particular it is unclear whether the obstacles listed are only potential problems, or if the men were actually experiencing them at the time of the historical landing.<sup>219</sup> As the final statement of the above passage reveals, the men are very shaken by the unusual circumstances and hold back from an energetic attack, which could indicate both a hesitation to approach the shore or an actual attempt to

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<sup>218</sup> 4.24.2-4.24.4.

<sup>219</sup> While one interpretation is that the men have not disembarked prior to the actions of an aquilifer, discussed below at pp. 258-260 what is important to note is the lack of clarity here.

land. It is not even clear if the ships have actually beached, as Caesar only uses *constituit* to describe his arrival, a word that could mean anchoring or beaching.<sup>220</sup> This lack of clarity and possibility for misinterpretation of the state of affairs is indicative of a lack of coherence, since the objective is to only capture the challenges faced in getting the men ashore.

Battle is clearly constructed to emphasise these challenges as Caesar reiterates the difficulties in describing actual combat. As he states:

Pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter. nostri tamen, quod neque ordines servare neque firmiter insistere neque signa subsequi poterant atque alius alia ex navi quibuscumque signis occurrerat se adgregabat, magnopere perturbabantur. hostes vero notis omnibus vadis, ubi ex litore aliquos singulares ex navi egredientes conspexerant, incitatis equis impeditos adoriebantur, plures paucos circumsistebant, alii ab latere aperto in universos tela coniciebant.<sup>221</sup>

He could have ended the description at *pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter*, if he wished, but instead uses repetition to reinforce the initial assessment of the challenge.<sup>222</sup> Reiteration of the dangers is evident in the description of men struggling to find footing, and the ability of the enemy to manoeuvre effectively in the same conditions, suggesting the account is not merely descriptive but a supporting statement regarding his initial assessment.<sup>223</sup> The description of combat is an explicit reinforcement of the initial conditions, and draws attention back to the challenge that the commander faced.

Caesar relates activity on the battlefield as a set of responses to these challenges, so that the focus of the passage is on how he meets and overcomes the obstacles to victory. Once the fighting starts, he does not locate himself on the battlefield, illustrating that this account is not designed to stress his physical presence at any

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<sup>220</sup> The meaning of the word *constituo* at 4.23.6 is not precise enough to determine if it means to land or to station the ships offshore, even with the ablatives in *aperto ac plano litore naves constituit*. See 3.14.3 where it clearly means “stationed” rather than beached.

<sup>221</sup> 4.26.1-4.26.4.

<sup>222</sup> On repetition see Williams (1985) p. 224, Riggsby (2006) p. 110.

<sup>223</sup> See 4.24.2-4.24.4.

actual or thematic crisis point.<sup>224</sup> Instead, he only mentions his perception of affairs, and his response to the unfolding situation. This is most evident in his reactions:

Quod ubi Caesar animadvertit, naves longas, quarum et species erat barbaris inusitatio et motus ad usum expeditior, paulum removeri ab onerariis navibus et remis incitari et ad latus apertum hostium constitui atque inde fundis, sagittis, tormentis hostes propelli ac submoveri iussit. quae res magno usui nostris fuit.

Quod cum animadvertisset Caesar, scaphas longarum navium, item speculatoria navigia militibus compleri iussit, et quos laborantes conspexerat, his subsidia submittebat.<sup>225</sup>

Both passages start with a statement of the commander's perception, and then provide the details of his response, whether that is to order supporting fire, or provide general assistance.<sup>226</sup> His orders and the action are conflated, so that the activity is described as part of the perspective and reaction of the commander, illustrating the role he wishes to be remembered for is as the one who gave the commands that brought about this victory.

Caesar describes activity in the battle to address the manner in which these obstacles are overcome and descriptive passages or contextual information are limited to instances when the challenge is addressed. As is evident in the above description of the small boats, how these boats provide aid or help in getting the men ashore is not described, as the emphasis is on Caesar's countermeasure when the difficulties are noticed.<sup>227</sup> Furthermore the warships only appear in the account when they provide missile cover, and Caesar never gives their fighting strength, in spite of the importance attributed to them.<sup>228</sup> He does not even state which legions he took at this time, and while he gives some numeric detail that might help reconstruct battle, the

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<sup>224</sup> See above pp. 215-222 for contrasts.

<sup>225</sup> 4.25.1-4.25.2, 4.26.4-4.26.5.

<sup>226</sup> See another perceptual example at pp. 233-235 above and at Octodurus of Galba at pp. 102-109.

<sup>227</sup> Moving around near shore could have been dangerous and difficult, especially if ships were already beaching, but all this is omitted.

<sup>228</sup> 4.25.1-4.25.2, 4.22.3. See below pp. 319-321 on numbers in the second invasion. Caesar has not even mentioned their location, and only clarifies that they were initially among the transports to make sense of their activity. At 4.24 their location is not mentioned.



quality and type of men taken are not described until they are specifically mentioned in combat.<sup>229</sup> In particular, the slingers and archers, so instrumental in the above response, have not even been mentioned as part of the expedition.<sup>230</sup> In omitting such details until the units are engaged in combat, and considering how important the role of these units is, their absence until active demonstrates that Caesar only addresses such elements of battle as required for the response to each obstacle.

Caesar also ignores the opportunity to examine details other than those that must be disposed of to achieve success. This is most notable once the obstacles to landing are surmounted in the statement: *nostri simul in arido constiterunt, suis omnibus consecutis in hostes impetum fecerunt atque eos in fugam dederunt...*<sup>231</sup> A great deal of simplification occurs in this statement, as it does not account for any variations in the distance the men have to wade, or time taken to reach shore. More important is that this is the first time the Romans have engaged this foreign adversary, and what he later reveals are their fighting techniques.<sup>232</sup> However the passage gives no details to understand how the infantry engaged the cavalry and chariots, since the primary concern is to show that once the obstacles are overcome, the enemy are quickly routed.<sup>233</sup> Similarly, missile fire from the warships is given a very simplified description in response to enemy attacks.<sup>234</sup> In adopting this approach, Caesar demonstrates that even novel, unusual, or potentially complex battlefield activity is

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<sup>229</sup> Similarly there are no details given regarding the forces left behind, only the details of Caesar's command delegations at 4.22.5-4.22.6. The absence of numeric data indicates how the delegation, not the forces utilised is the concern of the passage. Note that to determine which legions were sent to Britain the audience must wait until 4.25.3 and 4.32.1, where Caesar introduces the legion names as part of particular episodes. Note also he never mentions if the enemy infantry arrive during the landing.

<sup>230</sup> As units the auxiliaries are not mentioned at all, and it is only the missiles used that are mentioned at 4.25.1.

<sup>231</sup> 4.26.5.

<sup>232</sup> See pp. 286-288 below. Caesar reserves the description of chariot fighting for later where it serves the purpose of exonerating him from the inconclusive nature of the campaign.

<sup>233</sup> It is interesting to note the lack of distances in comparison to Caesar's earlier precision. The distance the men had to wade could be critical to an understanding of the difficulty of the landing, but it is not stated. Such detail would aid an audience to understand the actual battlefield circumstances, but Caesar only desires a general impression to be conveyed.

<sup>234</sup> While it is possible that in the historical battle the fire was effective along the entire front and forced an enemy retreat, probably only the heavier throwers had the range, as a scorpion might have the range to fire along the whole front of the beach. The bows and slings may only have been effective against troops nearby, particularly as they were fired from ships, and probably only had the ability to hit targets up to at most several hundred metres away. See McLeod, (1972) p.78. McLeod gives an absolute maximum range of 500 metres, well short of the length of beach that Rice Holmes (1911) p. 160 estimates to be at least a mile long. Even if McLeod's figures are too high, they still indicate a range that is unlikely to cover the whole beach. For sling ranges see Echols (1950) p. 228.

not as important as establishing a selection of obstacles to victory, and when these are overcome information is omitted.

More importantly, the description of activity is simplified in order to establish the challenges of the venture, as it allows Caesar to focus on activity that defines the nature of the achievement. He describes that the men are hesitant to advance due to the depth of the water, which he states as the most important factor in their failure to land.<sup>235</sup> The effect is of a whole army that is reluctant, a very unitary approach to activity considering action in the actual battle was probably occurring along the entire front of up to eighty ships, at different points and probably under slightly different circumstances.<sup>236</sup> By adopting this style, Caesar is able to present the depth of the water as a single challenge that is suitable to the purpose of his presentation, as it accounts for all battlefield activity according to a challenge and response dynamic, in this case, the danger of deep water.

This approach to water depth affords Caesar the opportunity to answer the challenge of the venture with a single, highly parochial response. By stating all the men hold back due to the sea, the obstacle of deep water can be countered by the actions of a single aquilifer. This is evident in the description of the man's actions:

At nostris militibus cunctantibus maxime propter altitudinem maris, qui decimae legionis aquilam ferebat, obtestatus deos ut ea res legioni feliciter eveniret, 'desilite' inquit 'commilitones, nisi vultis aquilam hostibus prodere; ego certe meum rei publicae atque imperatori officium praestitero'. hoc cum voce magna dixisset, se ex navi proiecit atque in hostes aquilam ferre coepit. tum nostri cohortati inter se, ne tantum dedecus admitteretur, universi ex navi desiluerunt. hos item ex proximis navibus cum conspexissent, subsecuti hostibus adpropinquaverunt.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> 4.25.3.

<sup>236</sup> It may be possible that the whole army acted in this way, but Caesar is more likely giving a general characteristic not designed to account for variations. As is evident, the characteristic he chooses suits the style of narration. See Rice Holmes (1911) p. 160. See also 4.26.3 for another example of *universos* and difficulty.

<sup>237</sup> 4.25.3-4.25.6.

The action of the battle turns on this one action by the aquilifer, so that Caesar applies universal significance to this feature.<sup>238</sup> The use of the word *universi*, while only referring to the men on the aquilifer's ship, is an odd choice but serves to give an implication of solidarity that applies to the whole army.<sup>239</sup> Jervis notes that difficult victories contain a marked turning point for Romans such as an encouraging speech by the commander or individual soldiers act of bravery.<sup>240</sup> In this case, simplification does not occur for coherency, but does so in order that challenges can be met with a universal response. This is a single dynamic to explain the turnaround in the battle, which Caesar uses for its parochial effect.

The importance of the aquilifer is that he is a countermeasure that is meaningful for the interpretation of the venture as a notable achievement, and the presentation concentrates on those aspects of his action that enhance the glory and achievement of the undertaking. In particular, the evocation of state and commander shows that the aquilifer's words are used to remind the audience of who this invasion is on behalf of and the reputation at stake.<sup>241</sup> The aquilifer is also identified as a Roman soldier with the words: *qui decimae legionis aquilam ferebat*.<sup>242</sup> His unnamed status is an odd occurrence considering that Caesar normally names *exempla* such as Baculus and Marcus Petronius, and could easily have been able to find out who the man was.<sup>243</sup> However, it does make him an instrument of the state and a clear exemplar of Roman courage, as he is one of many soldiers on the battlefield.<sup>244</sup> Therefore, while the record of the deed may possibly reflect something significant, this one action appeals

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<sup>238</sup> It is possible that this was where the advance started. Caesar's text certainly is intended to portray this idea.

<sup>239</sup> See Rice Holmes (1911) p. 160. As he notes, the word *universos* is not applied to all soldiers in 4.25 as the line of ships by his reckoning is a mile long.

<sup>240</sup> Note also Jervis (2001) p. 77. Jervis refers in particular to the role of Baculus at 2.25.

<sup>241</sup> 4.25.3-4.25.4. This may also explain why Caesar does not make a speech or locate himself on the battlefield. He is very careful to balance self-promotion with the idea that this is a Roman achievement. See Hall (1998) on Caesar and Rome in general. See also Hall (1998) p. 19 on the use of the future perfect to capture the soldierly speech. Nordling (1991) p. 80 examines why the speech is used by the aquilifer. See Rasmussen (1963) pp. 21-27 on the use of speeches. As Rasmussen notes, the aquilifer's speech serves as a literary climax. See Ramage (2003) p. 358 on the context of *felicitas*, which may refer to Caesar's fortune. Note also use of *rei publicae* not *populus romanus*. This is the first use of the term since Book One. See generally Ramage (2002) p. 125 where Ramage notes how *populus romanus* is used as propaganda for Caesar and appears some sixty three times in the work.

<sup>242</sup> The man is not even given a rank or the name of *aquilifer*.

<sup>243</sup> For Baculus see 2.25, for Marcus Petronius see 7.50. See also 5.37.5 for the *aquilifer* L. Petrosidus.

<sup>244</sup> This seems to be precisely the effect Caesar is trying to achieve when compared to his usual naming of heroic individuals. Note the similarity to the unnamed soldiers in the Germanic battle discussed above at pp 155-157.

to the audience's sensibilities, reminding them of the one who led the expedition and the implications for Rome.

The first invasion is illustrative of the use of battle to promote Caesar as commander, through reference to his abilities, and his role in the advancement of Roman interests. Whether he is drawing attention to the implications for Rome, or his personal contribution as commander in preparing for the expedition, self-promotion shapes the structure of the narrative and the manner that battle is portrayed. Caesar desires the affair to be viewed as a personal achievement, and the content of the battle narrative plays a critical role in pursuit of that goal.

### **Caesar and Vercingetorix in Book Seven**

In Book Seven, an important objective of the narrative, in particular the battle of Alesia, is to show Caesar's superiority as commander to his opposites in the Gallic command, most importantly Vercingetorix.<sup>245</sup> Kraus notes this is a trope, and as Jervis states, Vercingetorix serves as a "flawed double" of Caesar.<sup>246</sup> The narrative certainly shows a considerable effort to describe the campaign in terms of the influence of Vercingetorix, both in respect to the figure's centrality as the locus of Gallic activity, and to his personal characteristics that are often negative.<sup>247</sup> Caesar then shows his own superiority through the centrality of his character and Vercingetorix as an

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<sup>245</sup> 7.68-7.89. See Jervis (2001) pp. 171-176. See also Barlow (1998) pp. 152-153; Torigian (1998) p. 57; Nousek (2006) pp. 76-82; Kraus (2010) p. 44. Kraus notes how the narrative of speech and siege allows Caesar to "hold the spotlight" on Caesar and Vercingetorix for long periods. Pitcher (2007) p. 114, specifically notes how Caesar uses tense to show his own good generalship i.e. at 7.11.8, 7.13.1, 7.50.1, 7.44.3.

<sup>246</sup> See Jervis (2001) pp. 171-176. Kraus (2010) p. 44 notes the trope of the paired opposite commanders in Book Seven.

<sup>247</sup> Kahn (1971) argues Caesar has a model of tragedy in mind while writing the Vercingetorix episode. Pitcher (2007) pp. 106, 115, also notes the focus on the character of Vercingetorix. See also Riggsby (2006) pp. 121-122; Seager (2003) p. 29. See also Pitcher (1998) p. 108 on Ariovistus, who is also contrasted with Caesar. An example is at 1.40.2 where Caesar has his character speak on the loyalty of Ariovistus so that the text can go onto show that the treachery is true. As Pitcher says, it is designed to show more about the speaker i.e. that Caesar expects people to show consistency of behaviour in the absence of the contrary. As Pitcher states, Caesar's momentary misreading of Ariovistus is used by Caesar the historian, to shed a flattering light on his own character. Kraus (2010) p. 55 notes the pairing of Caesar and Ariovistus in Book One, and at p. 45 the contrast of Caesar and the Gauls at Avaricum.

opposed pair, and details are provided in order to address this relationship.<sup>248</sup> Battle supports this impression and the ongoing contrast is resolved in favour of Caesar at Alesia, where the passage shows the Roman commander as superior to his Gallic opposite.

The importance of Caesar is established from the start of Book Seven, where the motivation of the enemy and the reasons they unite are described with specific reference to his person.<sup>249</sup> His absence from Gaul is established as an important consideration in the reason for the revolt, as evident in the following passage:

... addunt ipsi et adfingunt rumoribus Galli, quod res poscere videbatur: retineri urbano motu Caesarem neque in tantis dissensionibus ad exercitum venire posse. hac impulsu occasione, qui iam ante se populi Romani imperio subiectos dolerent, liberior atque audacius de bello consilia inire incipiunt.<sup>250</sup>

A reason for the revolt is the absence of Caesar and the impetus this provides to the peoples who resent Roman rule, illustrating his central role in the narrative.<sup>251</sup> Extensive details are also given of their overall strategy, most important of which is the objective of cutting him off from his legions, so that not only the motivation for war, but the strategy of the enemy is centred on the person of Caesar.<sup>252</sup> The impact that he has in the campaign is established in the opening of the book, forming the foundation for contextualising the narrative that follows.

The other most important character of Book Seven is Vercingetorix, and the presentation of affairs is also focused on his influence and centrality.<sup>253</sup> While

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<sup>248</sup> Nousek (2006) pp. 76, 81 notes the polarity. Kraus (2010) p. 44 notes the parallel in the speeches of Vercingetorix at 7.29.1-5 and Caesar at 7.52.1-7.52.2, 7.53.1, and how Caesar's superiority is established in the pairing.

<sup>249</sup> This is the other side to Caesar's self-promotion as an inspiration to his own men. See Jervis (2001) pp. 159-161 on his inspiration to his own troops. When Caesar is absent, the enemy gain confidence.

<sup>250</sup> 7.1.2-7.1.4.

<sup>251</sup> See the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp for another example at pp. 239-243.

<sup>252</sup> Note the disjunction between the centrality of Caesar at the start of Book Seven, and the action and objectives that actually follow in the campaign. For example, the Carnutes attack Cenabum at 7.3 and there is no mention of any attempt to block Caesar from his armies.

<sup>253</sup> While other characters such as Lucterius appear in the book, such as at 7.8.1, the contrast with Vercingetorix has the most effect on the battle of Alesia, which is the focus of this section. As the leader identified by Caesar, it is not surprising to see Vercingetorix in this central role. Nevertheless,

Vercingetorix is not described until after the massacre of Cenabum, which is performed by the Carnutes, he is associated with the account by being described as *simili ratione*, associating him with the opening of the book.<sup>254</sup> The character of Vercingetorix, and his centrality in the uprising, is evident in the attention given to his family history and character.<sup>255</sup> Furthermore, Caesar utilises such details in conjunction with the activity of campaign to represent Vercingetorix's nature. The troops he gathers are robbers or other desperate types, his family is described as seeking *regnum*, and he is the centre of activity, persuading leaders and others to join.<sup>256</sup> He is even described as *rex*, and the tribes who join are described as attached to the man himself, due to his persuasive abilities.<sup>257</sup> Activity is described in terms of the individual, demonstrating that the context of the book is closely related to the character himself, so that as with Caesar, the person of Vercingetorix is central to the Gallic revolt.

The movement and reaction of the leaders is utilised throughout the book to illustrate Vercingetorix's inferiority as leader. This is evident in the ruthless manner he destroys towns to prevent the Romans from getting supplies, a measure noted as particularly harsh even by Caesar.<sup>258</sup> This cruelty stands in marked contrast to Caesar's stated *clementia* in Book Two, or the apparent necessity of Caesar's own ruthless treatment of the Usipetes and Tencteri.<sup>259</sup> The clash of the two leaders as context for events is particularly apparent in the account of Avaricum.<sup>260</sup> In the siege, Caesar describes that he moves against Vercingetorix who had approached the town to relieve it.<sup>261</sup> The passage focuses on the superiority of the Gallic leader's position,

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it does raise the question of what may have been omitted to create this impression. Jervis (2001) p. 175.

<sup>254</sup> 7.4.1.

<sup>255</sup> 7.4.1-7.4.2. As Jervis (2001) p. 171 notes "Caesar has made his enemy the dramatic centre of the book". Note how the representation of Vercingetorix is aimed at the idea of *regnum*, through the behaviour of his father. See Jervis (2001) pp. 167, 170 on the centrality of Vercingetorix, including focalization.

<sup>256</sup> 7.4.3, 7.4.1, 7.4.5. See 7.4 for his musters.

<sup>257</sup> 7.4.5, 7.4.6. See the use of *adiungit*. See also Jervis (2001) p. 171.

<sup>258</sup> See 7.14 in particular 7.14.10 where the measures are admitted to be harsh. See 7.31.2 for trickery. At 7.15 Vercingetorix opposes saving Avaricum and is harsh but bends to pleas. Jervis (2001) p. 174.

<sup>259</sup> See above pp. 243-245 for *clementia* and above pp. 297-319 below for the treatment of the Usipetes and Tencteri. When Caesar leaves the exiles to their own fate at Alesia at 7.78, this apparent act of cruelty is still relatively less than that of Vercingetorix, who casts them out, or the suggestion of Critognatus that they be eaten. See below pp. 264-265 on this incident in the Alesia narrative.

<sup>260</sup> See pp. 291-297 on Avaricum.

<sup>261</sup> 7.18.1-7.18.4.

with few details of the two armies, as the objective is to describe move and countermove.<sup>262</sup> Furthermore, the focus on comparing the two characters has a substantial effect on the result of the aborted confrontation, where Caesar describes his own concern for his men, and their loyalty to him, in stark contrast to the bickering among the Gauls.<sup>263</sup> Vercingetorix returns to his main army and relies on deceit to quell dissent among his allies, a passage that shows the fractious nature of the Gallic command and the dishonesty of their main commander.<sup>264</sup> Similarly, Vercingetorix's final assessment of Avaricum, that the Romans did not win through *virtus*, is in direct contrast to Caesar's assessment of the battle that sets *virtus* against enemy ingenuity, as the objective is to undermine the abilities of the Gallic leader.<sup>265</sup> Such contrasts demonstrate Caesar's better understanding of warfare, and superior leadership of his subordinates.<sup>266</sup> The implicit contrasts drawn in behaviour are specifically designed to promote the Roman leader, by establishing his clear superiority to his most notable opposite in the Gallic command.

This structural pairing affects other descriptions of combat, as Caesar contrasts the motivation and activity of Vercingetorix with his own. For example, an attack on the Romans addresses the arrogance and relative cowardice of the Gallic leader, whose

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<sup>262</sup> 7.18-7.19. Note how Caesar does not describe numeric details of the forces of Vercingetorix or the Romans. Caesar does not even state the proportion of troops he took with him. At 7.19.1-7.19.4 He gives terrain details, however these are essentially in support of his decision not to attack the superior position of Vercingetorix. He even provides details of an imaginary assault on the position to foreshadow what would be the result at 7.19.3-7.19.4. See also 7.34.3-7.35.6 for an example of the two in apposition, as noted by Jervis (2001) p. 176. The extent to which the movement of the two dominates the early part of Book Seven is evident as even the sack of Cenabum, Vellaunodunum and Noviodunum are brushed over quickly at 7.11-7.12, just before Vercingetorix's appearance at 7.12.1 and is within the manoeuvres of the two described from 7.9-7.15.

<sup>263</sup> 7.19-7.20. This is a powerful representation. Note that the first thing Caesar describes is the dissent and accusations, where he establishes the character of Vercingetorix and the enemy alliance. Caesar even includes a criticism of Gauls, and their avoidance of hard work. Caesar effectively turns what could be regarded as a Gallic victory into a failure of character and an example of impetuosity, and that the Gallic confederation is weak and founded on lies. Note also the way the accusations effectively come to nothing, and only appear to be included for their characterisation.

<sup>264</sup> 7.20.1-7.21.2 Note how the 10,000 men mentioned at 7.21.2 are never mentioned again, and it is unclear if these are the forces at 7.26.2-7.26.3. See also 6.11.4-6.11.5 for other divisions. See Riggsby (2006) p. 63.

<sup>265</sup> 7.29.2-7.29.4. For Caesar's confirmation of *virtus*, see 7.22.1-7.22.2 and pp. 165-166 above. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 84. Note also how Vercingetorix is incorrect when he states that the Romans will retreat at 7.20.10-7.20.11. See Rawlings p. 179. While Rawlings regards the Gauls as displaying *virtus*, this does not mean that the Romans did not possess it, and they actually triumph in any such contest. See also 7.9.1 for Caesar out thinking Vercingetorix. On the perversity of Vercingetorix's leadership note the following comment by Caesar: *itaque ut reliquorum imperatorum res adversae auctoritatem minuunt, sic huius ex contrario dignitas incommodo accepto in dies augebatur* 7.30.3.

<sup>266</sup> See also 7.13-7.14 for Caesar's superiority.

men swear an oath to ride through the Roman ranks twice, while Vercingetorix is not active in actual combat.<sup>267</sup> In the same battle Caesar is described in action wherever his own forces waver, and other details of the battle such as numbers, the use of missiles, and the nature of the fighting are omitted in favour of this attention on himself.<sup>268</sup> As the contrast illustrates, throughout the book there is a pairing of Caesar and Vercingetorix that has an influence on the battles described, and while representative of their roles as adversaries, it is also used to draw contrasts in behaviour and character. The selection of information suggests that contrasts that draw attention to Caesar's superiority to the person of Vercingetorix are a major objective and that this determines the level of detail and the choice of content.

### Leadership Contrasts at Alesia

The battle of Alesia is heavily influenced by the need to contrast Caesar with his enemies, and a general comparison to the Gauls is a core concept that guides the narrative, where he is set in opposition to the catalogue of enemy forces, or leaders such as Critognatus.<sup>269</sup> The narrative extends beyond the actual clash of forces, as attention is drawn to the spectacle, so that the narrative has internal witnesses as the Roman commander triumphs over his enemies in the battles fought.<sup>270</sup> The confrontation not only describes contrasts favourable to Caesar but focuses on his centrality, his instrumentality in command, and his highly visible role as victor.

The importance of contrasts to the account of Alesia is most evident in the speech of Critognatus, and the treatment of the people of Alesia by the two sides, a passage that is largely isolated from the course of the battle.<sup>271</sup> Critognatus gives an exemplary

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<sup>267</sup> Vercingetorix is described with the infantry, and then in retreat at 7.67.5 and 7.68.1-7.68.2. See for the oath 7.66.7. See Rawlings (1998) p. 182 who regards the oath as included to show superior Roman discipline. Mannetter (1995) p. 129 notes how oaths lead to failure, or are indicative of wrong doing. See also Ramage (2003) p. 346.

<sup>268</sup> See 7.67.2-7.67.4.

<sup>269</sup> 7.68-7.89. See Jervis (2001) p. 188. Ramage (2003) pp. 337-338 notes Caesar's planning. On contrasts of Romans and Gauls see Gerlinger (2008) pp. 193-199.

<sup>270</sup> See Feldherr (1998) pp. 4, 10; Kraus (2007) p. 375; Quintilian 8.3.66-8.3.70

<sup>271</sup> See 7.77-7.78. Lendon (1999) p. 317 states the concept of self-contained vignettes, which is appropriate here. See also 7.68-7.70. Note the reason for the investment of Alesia is the slaughter of Vercingetorix's cavalry and the terror it created in his army. Caesar uses this to explain why he begins an investments, as they are clearly too afraid to interfere. However at 7.70 the Gauls attack



speech that helps to establish the moral framework of the battle through the actions and speech of this individual leader.<sup>272</sup> The details of Critognatus' speech, with its implications of cannibalism, and the ejection of the townsfolk with the inclusion of details such as their pleas, establish the desperation of the Gauls and the measures they will go to for survival in the absence of help.<sup>273</sup> While Riggsby analyses the speech of Critognatus and the rhetorical techniques in play such as structure, appeal to visible authority and repetition, for the purposes of this section, the speech is not as important as the problematic relationship it has with the battle narrative.<sup>274</sup> As Caesar makes clear in the next passage, Gallic reinforcements immediately arrive, and it is even stated that these occurred at the same time.<sup>275</sup> The need for the measures is never addressed, and Caesar's silence on the relationship between these two events is indicative of his concern for the character of the battle, rather than the connections of events.

Furthermore, Caesar's own response to the ejection of the townsfolk illustrates this principle, as he simply refuses to let them through, with no statement of his reasons why.<sup>276</sup> While possibly demonstrating good sense, his reaction has no relationship to the arrival of the reinforcements either, so that the response of the two sides to the desperation of the siege is stated purely in terms of their nature, not their relationship to the battlefield. More importantly, the fate of these exiles is never explained, and they disappear from the narrative after they illustrate this contrast. Whether they died in between the lines, were caught up in the fighting and killed, or survived the battle is

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and Caesar seems to contradict his earlier statement about the Gauls being afraid. No assessment is made as to why the enemy cavalry engaged in battle.

<sup>272</sup> See Richter (1977) pp. 76-78. Note how Critognatus makes the speech not Vercingetorix, possibly to illustrate the divided nature of the Gallic command. Caesar also states this was particularly cruel 7.77.2-7.77.3. On the fractious nature of the Gauls as represented see Kraus (2009) pp. 165-166.

<sup>273</sup> 7.78.1-7.78.2. The Gauls hold off such a decision until absolutely essential, however this does not diminish the idea in Caesar's account that they essentially agreed with Critognatus.

<sup>274</sup> Riggsby (2006) p. 110-118.

<sup>275</sup> 7.79. Time is not quite clear throughout this account. Caesar does not track the siege by days, but characterises the event by incident, and concurrent or following activity. For instance the reinforcements arrive *interea*, it not being clear if this happens while the townsfolk are ejected, or during the speech of Critognatus and the debate of the Gauls.

<sup>276</sup> 7.78.5. Caesar describes in great detail their pleas, the fact there are children with them and that it was unjust to throw them out. However he then specifically states that he did not allow them through the Roman fortifications. He is specific here, guards are placed, even though this most likely was the case anyway, and Caesar himself refused them access. Caesar is using the episode to show his resolution, in comparison to the activity of the Gauls. Importantly, he does not provide any reason for why he refused the pleas of the townsfolk the implication being that this was a harsh act of war. Nevertheless Caesar adheres to constant conduct, the enemy fall to the lowest of depths, and this characterisation is placed before a full description of Caesar's own rationale.

never revealed, and Dio's attempt to explain their fate is evidence that even ancient sources noted the omission and saw it as important enough to explain.<sup>277</sup> For Caesar however their fate is not part of the structure of the account, as the objective is to create contrasts that form the framework of the narrative, even at the expense of the relationship between events.

Contrasts are established implicitly in the construction of the battle, most notably the way that the endeavours of the Roman commander are set against the vast numbers of Gauls opposed to him. Caesar describes in great detail his investment of Alesia, with a precise distance given regarding the circumference of the fortifications, the distances between defensive constructions and even an extended description of traps, the *cippus*, *stimulus*, and *lilium* that are used to impede attackers.<sup>278</sup> The level of detail is indicative of the concern to communicate the minutiae of his preparations, and his industry in preparing for the siege. The contrast of these preparations with the enemy is apparent as Caesar immediately follows this passage with a catalogue of enemy forces that invites comparison with his own precision and order.<sup>279</sup> The ordered construction of defences is set against the polyglot forces of the enemy, as is evident in the inclusion of maritime tribes in the catalogue.<sup>280</sup> Such emphasis on the character of the Gallic confederation, with its attendant details, is a direct contrast between the Roman leader's organised, directed fortifications with a large and variegated mass.

Some details appear specifically included to illustrate the negative traits of the Gauls. In a similar manner to the Belgae account, details are included that establish disharmony, such as the description of the Bellovaci, who are mentioned in spite of the information that they only send a token force.<sup>281</sup> Their details show the Gauls are not naturally inclined to organisation or co-operation, so that the highly individualistic

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<sup>277</sup> See Dio 40.40.4.

<sup>278</sup> 7.72.-7.74. See in particular 7.73.5, 7.73.9. Riggsby (2006) p. 206 notes how Caesar is described as constructing the defences. See Pascucci (1973) p. 501 for the idea these are not technical terms but to show ingenuity.

<sup>279</sup> 7.75.1-7.75.5. Dodington (1980) p. 55 states that the works of Alesia substitute for a catalogue of Caesar's troops, as they appear right next to Gallic catalogue. Kraus (2010) p. 49, also notes self-promotional objectives in the description of the siege works.

<sup>280</sup> See 7.75.4 where Caesar specifically mentions that they border the ocean. See Mannetter (1995) pp. 143-148 for other uses of this catalogue, such as leadership, the unitary Romans versus the polyglot nature of the enemy, and enemy disorganisation.

<sup>281</sup> 7.75.5.

character of the force, its unnatural size and nature is established.<sup>282</sup> The structure of the list, with its disorganised numerical order, and the inclusion of details such as the defection of Commius have this effect, as the communal cause is established as counter to principles of good order and *fides*.<sup>283</sup> Finally, the enemy is ascribed with a singular overconfidence, as they imagine the effect of their attack on the entrenchments.<sup>284</sup> Appearing as it does after Caesar's own preparations, the catalogue is illustrative of command comparisons in the narrative that display his relative superiority.

The most important pairing is evident near the end of the account, where the superficial superiority and confidence of the Gauls is stated on several occasions, in preparation for Caesar's response through the action of battle. In describing the activity of the Gauls prior to the final attack of the battle, Caesar takes care to make clear their confidence and numerical superiority.<sup>285</sup> He mentions that they have plans, although no mention of what these are is given, and it is just stated that they perform unspecified activity *occulte*.<sup>286</sup> Caesar's actions are absent in contrast, and there is no speech, or dispositions or council of war on his part.<sup>287</sup> This contrast of Gallic activity with a relative paucity of details regarding the Roman commander is deliberate, as it enables the narrative that follows to resolve how the Roman commander and his opposites are understood.

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<sup>282</sup> There are many similarities here to the catalogue of the Belgae at 2.4, such as the Gallic forces mentioned being those promised rather than those who actually come to the battle. See pp. 71-88 above. See also Gerlinger (2008) pp. 240-243 on order versus chaos. In particular see the way that the Bellovaci are utilised at 2.4, discussed at pp. 179-180 above.

<sup>283</sup> For Commius see 7.75.5-7.76.3.

<sup>284</sup> 7.76.6. Note how it this statement of confidence is not attributed to the leaders, or Vercingetorix, but to every man among the enemy. For confidence also see 2.30.3-2.31.6, 3.24.2.

<sup>285</sup> 7.83.4.

<sup>286</sup> 7.83.5. The enemy plans are mentioned but not detailed, in this case merely establishing that they have a plan and are confident. There are several references to leadership activity in 7.83, such as the decision to scout and the mention of decisions, possibly to establish that this is Gallic cunning at play after the failure of brute strength. The stakes are thus raised as their vast force is now being augmented by cunning.

<sup>287</sup> 7.83-7.84. See also the duel of Manlius and the Gaul at Livy 7.9.6-7.9.10, where boastfulness and confidence of the enemy are contrasted to the Roman *exemplum*. See also Oakley (1997) p. 116. Walsh (1963) pp. 200, 255-256. Caesar's self-representation appears broadly similar to the historical exemplar in this respect.

## Caesar and Vercingetorix in Battle

The battle is specifically designed to emphasise the superiority of the Roman commander to his Gallic opposite. As with the campaign, activity in the siege is often described in terms of the actions of the two leaders.<sup>288</sup> The battle builds towards a climactic encounter in which attention is drawn to the spectacle of the event, and the personal intervention of Caesar. Nousek notes that the narrative is structured to capture the perspective of these two leaders, and details are often described from their point of view to draw implicit contrasts favourable to Caesar.<sup>289</sup> However at the crisis, Vercingetorix disappears from the account, only reappearing at the end to represent the defeat of the Gauls.<sup>290</sup> Vercingetorix is represented to show the superiority of Caesar, and the battle is important in establishing the Roman general's distinctiveness as commander.

A relative flaw of Vercingetorix is that he displays a level of selfishness in the battle, a marked contrast to Caesar's general association with the Roman state throughout the work. This is communicated through the orders Vercingetorix gives regarding reinforcements, when he claims that 80,000 men will die with him if no help is sent.<sup>291</sup> As he states:

Sua in illos merita proponit obtestaturque ut suae salutis rationem habeant neu se optime de communi libertate meritum hostibus in cruciatum dedant.<sup>292</sup>

This appeal for self-preservation in the desire for reinforcements does not include any of the advantages that such troops would have arriving as an armed force at the rear of the Romans, as the purpose is to show the self-interest of the enemy commander.<sup>293</sup> Such an appeal is in dramatic contrast to Caesar's activity throughout the work, which

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<sup>288</sup> For scholarship on the campaign, see pp. 260-261 fn. 248-249 above. See also Nousek (2006) p. 80.

<sup>289</sup> See Nousek (2006) p. 75 on perceptual shifts. For Caesar's centrality see p. 79.

<sup>290</sup> Riggsby (2006) p. 100 notes the failures of Vercingetorix in regards to Alesia, such as his inability to sway the Bellovaci.

<sup>291</sup> 7.71.1, 7.71.3-7.71.4.

<sup>292</sup> 7.71.3.

<sup>293</sup> Jervis (2001) pp. 171-180 does not directly address self-interest, but the concept is consistent with his deceptive treatment of fellow Gauls after Avaricum at 7.21-7.22.

tends to associate the Roman commander with the interests of Rome.<sup>294</sup> The selfish character of Vercingetorix is displayed through this tactical consideration, demonstrating that the battle is designed to evoke a poor picture of the enemy leader and his rationales.

More specific contrasts are also drawn between the behaviour of Vercingetorix and Caesar, and information is used to draw inferences about their different qualities. Direct pairing is evident in the contrast of preparations by the two commanders, as information is given about how each prepares for the siege, with no qualification as to the success of these measures.<sup>295</sup> Caesar's superiority is also evident when Vercingetorix retreats to Alesia, and the Gallic leader's selfish instinct is evident in his order for the baggage to follow him as he leaves.<sup>296</sup> The Roman commander however states that he draws two legions on a hill to guard his, even though he is in pursuit and the threat to his baggage probably less.<sup>297</sup> The implied comparison sets Caesar's concern for his army against the selfishness of the enemy leader, and the slaughter of the Gallic rear guard demonstrates the result of Vercingetorix's poor conduct.<sup>298</sup> This implicit contrast draws attention to the difference in the two leaders and casts Caesar favourably compared to his opponent.

The confrontation between the commanders builds in intensity, and contextual details that would allow a more objective assessment are sometimes briefly summarised or even missing due to this choice. This is evident in an early cavalry battle, which is described with very little detail about the dispositions or state of the forces involved.<sup>299</sup> Specific or even general numbers are missing, even though Caesar states that the enemy are hampered by such factors.<sup>300</sup> As the narrative progresses combat is only given a general character, at one point summarised as *summa vi ab utrisque*

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<sup>294</sup> See Ramage (2002) p. 132.

<sup>295</sup> See 7.71 and 7.74. Caesar also gives detailed descriptions of Vercingetorix's supply plans. He states that Vercingetorix calculated he had 30 days of supplies, but makes no independent assessment here of the actual supplies and timeframes involved. It is focused through Vercingetorix to illustrate his defensive mindset and his hopes of succour, rather than in the actual chances of this happening.

<sup>296</sup> 7.68.1-7.68.2.

<sup>297</sup> 7.68.2-7.68.3. As the baggage is not actually attacked, the statement is unnecessary.

<sup>298</sup> 7.68.2-7.68.3.

<sup>299</sup> See 7.70. This is clear in way legions are said to have been placed in front of the camp by Caesar. There is no context for how many Romans were in the fight and how many in reserve here.

<sup>300</sup> 7.70.3-7.70.4.

*contenditur*.<sup>301</sup> As Jervis notes the words *uterque* and *utrimque* are used to indicate hard fought battles, with five of the nine times appearing in the siege of Alesia, an indicator that combat is being contextualised based on its intensity.<sup>302</sup> The accumulation of detail to establish intensity is evident in the following statement from later in the narrative:

...a castris longurios, musculos, falces reliquaque quae eruptionis causa paraverat profert. pugnatur uno tempore omnibus locis atque omnia temptantur; quae minime visa pars firma est, huc concurritur. Romanorum manus tantis munitionibus distinetur nec facile pluribus locis occurrit. multum ad terrendos nostros valet clamor qui post tergum pugnantibus exstitit, quod suum periculum in aliena vident virtute constare; omnia enim plerumque, quae absunt, vehementius hominum mentes perturbant.<sup>303</sup>

Generalisations are used in this passage to reduce the battle to simple concepts.<sup>304</sup> This is evident in the repetition of *quae*, and the remark regarding fear in the soldiery, which is forceful but not specific in terms of units or locations.<sup>305</sup> Asyndeton is also used to capture the accumulation of measures such as the *longurios*, *musculos*, and *falces* in use.<sup>306</sup> In the battle, a list of measures the enemy take to overcome the defences is similarly included such as ramps, *testudo*, hurled missiles and even the terrain listed as an accumulation of detail.<sup>307</sup> While the nature of the combat at a double line of fortifications would have been difficult to narrate, combat is described in broad terms to capture the intensity, and when information is provided it appears in order to give the fighting only general character.

Combat is described to draw attention to the spectacle and the contest of forces, so that the assessment of the commanders is placed within the perceptual framework of an internal audience. In one encounter, Caesar is clear that fighting takes place in

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<sup>301</sup> 7.70.1-7.70.2.

<sup>302</sup> Jervis (2001) p. 185. See also 7.80.5, 7.81.5, 7.85.2. See 7.88.2 for the use of the word regarding sound.

<sup>303</sup> 7.84.1-7.84.5.

<sup>304</sup> See Webb (2012) pp. 12-15 on vividness.

<sup>305</sup> See *terrendos nostros* at 7.84.4-7.84.4.

<sup>306</sup> Mannetter (1995) p. 148.

<sup>307</sup> 7.86.4-7.86.5.

view of all, the idea supported by the statement: *erat ex oppido Alesia despectus in campum*.<sup>308</sup> This concept is iterated several times in the episode:

Quod in conspectu omnium res gerebatur neque recte aut turpiter factum celari poterat, utrosque et laudis cupiditas et timor ignominiae ad virtutem excitabat.

Vercingetorix ex arce Alesiae suos conspicatus ex oppido egreditur...<sup>309</sup>

As these statements reveal, there is an audience rating and judging the combatants, illustrating that the interpretative framework for battle is based around the idea of a contest.<sup>310</sup> The description of Vercingetorix just prior to the final instance of fighting is particular to establish his role as a spectator, as he spies all things from the heights of Alesia in a position of apparent confidence.<sup>311</sup> As Kraus notes, this is a technique used by both Livy and Tacitus, and it is utilised several times by Caesar.<sup>312</sup> In this case attention is drawn to the internal audience, and the objective of establishing the spectacle is clarified by these passages regarding the witnesses to the deciding moments of the contest.

With an internal audience established, Caesar prepares for his personal intervention through several methods. At the point of the final confrontation, the statement of the general state of affairs and objectives of the enemy clarifies the stakes involved.<sup>313</sup> As he states, clearly showing the potential consequences:

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<sup>308</sup> 7.79.3. See also 7.80.2-7.80.3. See Kraus (2009) p. 167 on the Roman conception of exemplary deeds done by *spectatissimi*. On shifting narrative perspectives in battle see Grillo (2011) p. 256.

<sup>309</sup> 7.80.5. 7.84.1. See also 1.50.3-1.50.4, for witnesses to courage. See also Jervis (2001) pp. 185-186.

<sup>310</sup> Caesar's concern is with the idea it was fought in front of all, evident in the references to the visual element.

<sup>311</sup> 7.84.1.

<sup>312</sup> Kraus (2005b) notes at pp. 244-245, of Livy 1.24-1.25 and Tacitus 15.48-74, that these use "spectacular effects, suspense, and appeal to extra-literary experiences such as theatre-going or gladiatorial combat". See also *BG* 5.16 where it is important that the army witness the problems of fighting chariots as discussed at pp. 333-334 below. See also Feldherr (1998) in general on the idea of spectacle. Quintilian 8.3.66 is an early source on internal witnesses.

<sup>313</sup> See also the general structure of the Quintus Cicero siege at pp. 239-243 where the narrative prepares for Caesar's arrival.

Utrisque ad animum occurrit unum esse illud tempus, quo maxime contendere conveniat: Galli nisi perfringerint munitiones, de omni salute desperant; Romani si rem obtinuerint, finem laborum omnium expectant.<sup>314</sup>

Caesar reserves this moment in the battle to describe the objectives of the enemy, so that their aims are stated just prior to his intervention and his role in frustrating them most apparent.<sup>315</sup> The interpretation of events, that it is an end to the labours, is most indicative that the battle is constructed to make the Roman commander central to the ending of the conflict. Just as in the Sabis River narrative, combat is also described to capture suspense prior to Caesar's physical intervention on the battlefield.<sup>316</sup> He describes the overall situation and the dilemma that the Romans face as a general observation using words such as *perturbant*, and the description of general attacks from front and rear.<sup>317</sup> By ending a chapter with the word *perturbant* and a statement about the uncertain state of mind among the Romans, Caesar creates a suspension of action based on the fear of his men, where all is held in the balance. He also describes his speech to the men, an unlikely thing to do based on the impression the battle is already raging everywhere, but is reserved for the midst of the battle rather than the start.<sup>318</sup> These measures ensure that the narrative prepares for appearance of Caesar through implications that maximise the scope, and necessity of his arrival.

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<sup>314</sup> 7.85.2-7.85.4.

<sup>315</sup> Whitby (2007) p. 77. Whitby notes some possible inaccuracies in Caesar's description of Alesia. As Whitby notes details of fortifications are "homogenised" a quality that extends to combat. See Nousek (2006) p. 80 on the climax of the battle. Caesar gives a dramatic account of the stakes involved and the objectives of the forces now, after fighting has commenced, rather than in the plans of the two before battle, as the dramatic moment is being drawn out with a description of the mindsets of the two sides. These details would probably have formed part of their plans and objectives prior to the battle, among the leaders anyway, but Caesar attributes it to all the Gauls in the middle of the fighting. The content of this passage is important, as it encapsulates the idea that this is the last chance for the defenders, even though this may not have actually been the case. The Gauls after all had already attacked several times, and Caesar appears to be applying retrospective knowledge to the motivation of the troops, as he knows the outcome of the fighting. As this is even described as a general end to labours, it foreshadows the outcome of the campaign itself. See also Whiteley (1956, 1981) pp. 180-181.

<sup>316</sup> See also the Sabis River account discussed above at pp. 222-238.

<sup>317</sup> 7.84.4, 7.84.5. The actual advance, attacks and so forth are not covered, only the general conditions of battle. The *sententia* is important, Caesar stating how the Romans heard attacks from front and rear, and how they were reliant on others for their survival. By ending the chapter with the word *perturbant* and the statement about the uncertain state of mind among the Romans, Caesar creates a suspension of action based on the fear of his men, all is held in the balance, which prepares the text for his own intervention.

<sup>318</sup> 7.86.3-7.86.4. Note the similarity to Helvetii discussed above at pp. 219-220.



Having made clear that the matter is at an important juncture, Caesar narrows the focus of details to prepare for his physical intervention.<sup>319</sup> He is specifically mentioned at the start of the three chapters that lead up to his intervention in combat, illustrating a pattern that defines activity within his own contribution.<sup>320</sup> There is also a concentration of detail and activity similar to the Sabis River narrative, with a precise listing of cohort numbers, and the description of Labienus sending messengers to Caesar to find out what to do.<sup>321</sup> Caesar describes his own movements on the battlefield drawing closer to the crisis point with each section:

Mittit primum Brutum adulescentem cum cohortibus Caesar, post cum aliis C. Fabium legatum; postremo ipse, cum vehementius pugnaretur, integros subsidio adducit. restituto proelio ac repulsis hostibus eo quo Labienum miserat contendit; cohortes IIII ex proximo castello deducit, equitum partem se sequi, partem circumire exteriores munitiones et a tergo hostes adoriri iubet. Labienus postquam neque aggeres neque fossae vim hostium sustinere poterant, coactis undecim cohortibus, quas ex proximis praesidiis deductas fors obtulit, Caesarem per nuntios facit certiore, quid faciendum existimet. accelerat Caesar, ut proelio intersit.<sup>322</sup>

He first sends subordinates, then goes himself to deal with trouble. He then describes how he rushes to Labienus, and breaks from his own movement to describe the situation that Labienus is in and his plea for advice, then the passage ends with the commander rushing to help again.<sup>323</sup> The sequence builds towards Caesar's intervention through the gradual movement of his person to the crisis point on the battlefield.<sup>324</sup> The level of detail, and the reiteration of his movement, establishes a narrative locus regarding the resolution of Caesar's command superiority.

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<sup>319</sup> 7.87.1-7.87.3.

<sup>320</sup> 7.85.1, 7.86.1, 7.87.1.

<sup>321</sup> 7.87.2, 7.87.3. In contrast to earlier confrontations at Alesia, Caesar uses precise numeric factors at the climactic point in the narrative. The impression of precision is given through the numbers of cohorts listed, four with Caesar, forty gathered by Labienus, and the splitting of cavalry. No numbers of Germanic cavalry are given, but the Roman forces are specifically listed. This sets up a contrast with the only vaguely described mob of enemy assaulting the defences, against clearly defined Roman units.

<sup>322</sup> 7.87.1-7.87.3.

<sup>323</sup> Note the lack of exact detail on troops sent with Brutus, stated merely as *cohortibus*.

<sup>324</sup> What the sequence actually was is unclear without other evidence.

Caesar is the centre of attention at this point, illustrating that the battle is developed to draw attention to his contribution at the crisis.<sup>325</sup> As he states:

Eius adventu ex colore vestitus cognito, quo insigni in proeliis uti consuevit, turmisque equitum et cohortibus visis quas se sequi iusserat, ut de locis superioribus haec declivia et devexa cernebantur, hostes proelium committunt. utrimque clamore sublato excipit rursus ex vallo atque omnibus munitionibus clamor. nostri omissis pilis gladiis rem gerunt. repente post tergum equitatus cernitur; cohortes aliae adpropinquant. hostes terga vertunt; fugientibus equites occurrunt. fit magna caedes.<sup>326</sup>

This intervention is the most striking aspect of the narrative, particularly in the mention of the colour of his cloak, a clear reference to the spectacle of the scene.<sup>327</sup> Where forces are disposed of and how is unclear, but the matter is mentioned as waged with swords, and there is the mention of noise as part of the dramatic context. Short staccato sentences form the body of the turnaround, cohorts rush up, the cavalry attack from the rear, the enemy turn and are cut down.<sup>328</sup> Furthermore combat is given short narrative space, and the actual duration not specified. The arrival of the commander is closely associated with the victory itself, as following his intervention the narrative quickly reaches the resolution of *fit magna caedes*. This structuring of his intervention illustrates the objective of associating Caesar and victory, with a quick summary designed to maximise his presence at the resolution of the battle.

Furthermore, the passage immediately includes details designed to further associate Caesar's personal intervention with victory. He mentions casualties, particularly the enemy leaders, even including the taking of seventy four standards, in spite of the text indicating that the fighting appeared to continue.<sup>329</sup> There is even mention of how few

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<sup>325</sup> Note that this does not mean he did not play an instrumental role in the historical battle. The narrative however, is designed to specifically focus on his role.

<sup>326</sup> 7.88.1-7.88.3.

<sup>327</sup> This is a highly visual climax that involves reference to internal spectators at 7.88.1. As Nousek (2006) pp. 80-81 notes, it is the climax of the work. There are various narrative techniques at play that indicate this, such as the ascending tricolon of commanders, and the apparent *sententia* at 7.86.3.

<sup>328</sup> Nousek (2006) pp. 80-81. See Riggsby (2006) pp. 148. At p. 148 Riggsby notes of 7.88.2-7.88.3 that the short choppy statements are indicative of the decisive character of the engagement, and not indicative of senatorial reporting style.

<sup>329</sup> 7.88.4-7.88.5.

escaped unharmed, even though it is unclear if this is just the 60,000 sent by Vercingetorix or the whole force of the enemy.<sup>330</sup> Similar to the Sabis River narrative, the account of combat largely breaks down at this point, and the fate of those who fled to their homes is particularly evident of the simplification, as it establishes the conclusive nature of the Roman victory in a short space by relating events outside of the battlefield.<sup>331</sup> The effect is that victory statistics are closely associated with Caesar's personal intervention, indicative of the strong self-promotional association in this section of the text.

The contrast of leadership is apparent as while the Roman leader's impact is maximised at this moment, Vercingetorix is entirely missing, with his presence only established as witness and symbol of defeat.<sup>332</sup> Caesar includes a specific reference to terrain to explain why everybody could see his cloak, that also establishes his centrality at this point and his visibility to all witnesses, not just his own troops.<sup>333</sup> He also mentions the effect this had on spectators in the town in order to invite consideration of their reactions.<sup>334</sup> As this is where Vercingetorix was last placed, he too is relegated to the role of spectator at the end, effectively helpless as Caesar completes the destruction of his army.<sup>335</sup> The text illustrates that Vercingetorix's role was only show, appearing before the fight in a superficially commanding position, but disappearing at the most crucial stage of the battle except as witness to his opposite's superior conduct of the battle.

The role of Vercingetorix as contrasting leader is apparent as he only appears after the slaughter and defeat to represent the defeat of the Gauls.<sup>336</sup> The description of his words to the other Gauls indicates that Caesar provides a final assessment through the

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<sup>330</sup> 7.88. The enemy in Alesia somehow let their men know to retreat, and Caesar focuses on thoughts of flight in the enemy.

<sup>331</sup> 7.88.7. Note how quickly a conclusive result is obtained. The enemy disperse, as Caesar condenses activity at a campaign level so that the results of battle are closely linked to the overall success. Caesar even makes sure, as he did at 4.26.5 that this could have been even greater except of the exhaustion of the troops. For the Sabis River see pp. 231-232 above.

<sup>332</sup> Jervis (2001) p. 155 notes a general lack of enemy leaders shown in battle.

<sup>333</sup> 7.88.1.

<sup>334</sup> 7.88.5-7.88.6.

<sup>335</sup> Vercingetorix is not mentioned from 7.84.2-7.88.7. For the diminishment of a character, see also Ariovistus discussed above at pp. 158-160.

<sup>336</sup> 7.89.1.

perception of his opposite, in which the Gallic leader admits defeat.<sup>337</sup> In the reckoning of these two leaders, the account demonstrates their differences in behaviour, and in their roles as leaders of their sides, so that the battle addresses and resolves the pairing evident throughout the campaign narrative. It does so by maximising Caesar's contribution at the decisive moment, and relegating Vercingetorix to a symbolic role where he represents the defeat and surrender of the Gauls, who are proven inferior to the Roman commander.<sup>338</sup> The manner in which Vercingetorix selectively appears and disappears in the final confirmation demonstrates that the character is utilised in the self-promotional context of the battle.

Caesar's concern with self-promotion in the *Bellum Gallicum* forms the foundation of numerous campaigns and the manner that particular battles are portrayed. Battles either address his self-representation directly, or associate him with important themes and their resolution. His qualities and instrumentality are integral to the description of battle, and the manner that he communicates these aspects of his leadership is demonstrative of how information that supports self-promotion has taken precedence over a comprehensive description of circumstances. Information is simplified or omitted where it does not address this aim, and structurally the text addresses self-promotion, or in the case of Alesia, utilises a contrast of characters to show his superiority to his enemies. The various ways in which the content of battle narrative is addressed at the positive portrayal of the commander is conclusive in demonstrating the motives behind such accounts, and the predominant role of battle in direct self-promotion.

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<sup>337</sup> 7.89.1-7.89.2.

<sup>338</sup> Nousek (2006) p. 81 notes the end to the personal conflict here.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE DEFENCE OF CAESAR THROUGH BATTLE

The persuasive role of battle narrative is not just apparent in the display of positive attributes, but in the manner Caesar protects himself from potential criticism.<sup>1</sup> While Kagan believes that whether or not Caesar had to justify his overall conduct, particularly war, is not relevant to an analysis of battle narratives, the battles are actually determined by their place in the text and specific objectives related to his conduct of the war.<sup>2</sup> Plutarch in particular suggests that individuals like Cato were willing to utilise setbacks or mistakes against Caesar, such as the calls to hand him to the enemy after the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri.<sup>3</sup> Plutarch's statement is a reminder that no matter when the work was composed, the presence of real or potential enemies in Rome suggested a need for defensiveness, and this is evident to some extent throughout the whole work. Caesar presents his qualities to illustrate good command, including his diligence and care, even in the face of setbacks or defeats.<sup>4</sup> In particular combat and its circumstantial information are used implicitly to defend the commander, to explain his actions and support his conclusions. The case studies of this chapter therefore focus on battles and campaigns that illustrate a defensive quality, such as the combat after the landing in the first invasion of Britain.<sup>5</sup> In this passage Caesar describes that he was frustrated in bringing about a quick victory, and that the campaign was inconclusive in its results. Combat is described in order to highlight the problematic features of the campaign, and battle used to offset his care under the circumstances and to support the decision to withdraw. A different form of explanation is evident in the sack of Avaricum, where the massacre of the populace is given an implicit explanation through the narrative.<sup>6</sup> Whether or not the

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<sup>1</sup> See Ramage (2001) on the idea of *bellum iustum*. This study is primarily concerned with the more immediate concerns of individual battle narratives and the manner specific episodes are treated. Riggsby (2006) p. 157 notes the complications of associating Roman martial values with unjustified imperialism. See Seager (2003) p. 19. Pre-emptive justification is implicit in the text, and there is no need to state it overtly in order for it to exist. See also Heubner (1974) p. 104. Note *Aeneid* 6.851-853 on the general martial justification for war.

<sup>2</sup> Kagan (2006) p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> See Plutarch *Cat Min* 51.1-2, cf *Caesar* 22 and below pp. 297-298.

<sup>4</sup> Gelzer (1968) p. 169 notes this in general. See Ramage (2003) p. 338 on *consilium* as an example of a positive quality that also defends Caesar from criticism. On composition see pp. 26-27 above.

<sup>5</sup> 4.27-4.37. The major exceptions are the defeat at Gergovia, examined at pp. 116-123 above, and the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta, examined at pp. 209-213 above.

<sup>6</sup> 7.16-7.28.

historical massacre could have reflected badly on Caesar, details are included to explain that the slaughter of the inhabitants came about specifically due to the behaviour of the defenders and the Roman soldiery. The defeat of the Usipetes and Tencteri is also examined, since in this case Caesar appears to accept his own responsibility, but the campaign emphasises the sheer necessity of destroying these tribes, both in terms of the threat that they posed to Gaul, and their untrustworthiness as a people.<sup>7</sup> The description is very brief, but manages to capture the justification for war, with implicit arguments about the danger of these peoples that extends into the account of battle.

This use of battle narrative for self-defence is not just limited to individual campaigns, and Book Five of the *Bellum Gallicum* describes circumstances where the problems of one campaign are addressed through the presentation of another. In particular the second invasion of Britain addresses the problematic circumstances of the first, demonstrating the interrelationship of campaign narratives in defence of Caesar's conduct.<sup>8</sup> More importantly, the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta, described later in this book is a significant defeat, and it is one that he accounts for throughout several episodes.<sup>9</sup> For example, the need to account for defeat has a significant effect on the description of the second invasion of Britain, where Caesar implies that the massacre was not due to neglect on his part, by showing his attention to affairs in Gaul, his general diligence, and by demonstrating that subordinates have a level of agency that makes them responsible for their own actions in battle.<sup>10</sup> Most importantly, after the description of the massacre, Caesar immediately utilises the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp to contrast correct forms of behaviour that highlight the unsanctioned nature of the defeated commanders' decisions.<sup>11</sup> The manner that the battles of this particular book work in conjunction illustrates the role that they play in supporting the commander's overall conduct, and defending him against real or potential criticism.

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<sup>7</sup> 4.1-4.15.

<sup>8</sup> 4.27-4.37, 5.1-5.23.

<sup>9</sup> Note that this does not contradict Rosenstein, (1990) p. 6 who has noted that defeat itself did not seem to bring unusual stigma, as Caesar is accounting for the textual representation of the defeat. In Caesar's case, he managed to recover from historical defeats such as the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta's forces, and it his reputation as presented in the text he is concerned with.

<sup>10</sup> 5.1-5.23.

<sup>11</sup> 5.19-5.51.

## Caesar's Campaign Conduct

Caesar's conduct of his campaigns in general shows a concern to forestall potential criticism. This is evident in delegations of command, as delegations are sometimes included even where the subordinates are no longer mentioned as the objective is to highlight Caesar's overall diligence. Similarly, troop dispositions, decisions by the commander, and descriptions that show his understanding of warfare all serve to protect the commander from criticism. These details are not simply describing activity, as the content, and manner of presentation display the objective of self-defence.

A concern to protect Caesar from potential criticism is apparent in the use of delegations of command to show attention to detail and actions that forestall trouble.<sup>12</sup> While such a motivation is part of the self-promotional nature of the work, it also functions to protect him from potential criticism, through a demonstration of his diligence and attention to detail.<sup>13</sup> In this regard he makes general references to dispositions in the campaigns in order to show his mitigation of real or potential dangers. This is evident in the first invasion of Britain, in which Caesar describes in detail the disposition of his commanders in Gaul, even though they are not mentioned in any later activity.<sup>14</sup> A similar example of delegation occurs in the Venetii campaign, where he includes dispositions of commanders in Gaul to illustrate his concern for the broader context of the campaign.<sup>15</sup> The description of legates dispatched to the Belgae, Aquitania and other Gallic tribes is described before the more pertinent information that Caesar orders Brutus to gather a navy from among the Pictoni and Santoni, demonstrating that his own precautions come before information more relevant to that campaign.<sup>16</sup> The mitigation of the troubles of campaign is evident as he states that he sent forces against the Aquitani *ne ex his nationibus auxilia in Galliam mittantur ac tantae nationes coniungantur*.<sup>17</sup> Caesar even describes the possible crossing of the Rhine by Germanic invaders, a threat that Rice Holmes

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<sup>12</sup> See Ramage (2003) p. 364.

<sup>13</sup> See generally Ramage (2003) p. 334 on *diligentia*, 337-338 on *consilium*. Note that this is applicable no matter when the work was written, as Caesar would want to explain himself to his audience whether the work was written periodically, or after 52 BCE.

<sup>14</sup> 4.22.5-4.22.6. See also 4.38 for the final actions of Book Four.

<sup>15</sup> 3.11.

<sup>16</sup> See 3.11.5 for the orders to Brutus.

<sup>17</sup> 3.11.3-3.11.4.

rightly questions but that indicates how broadly he wishes to capture his sphere of concern.<sup>18</sup> The effect is that the commander demonstrates a concern for the broader picture, which illustrates his vision and foresight in order to forestall possible criticism.

In the defeat at Gergovia, Caesar uses the disposition and activity of his forces in a similar way, to demonstrate that he was not negligent in his attention to matters. The defeat of three legions outside Gergovia is attributed to the over enthusiasm of the men, establishing where the failure occurred.<sup>19</sup> As illustrated in Chapter Two, Caesar's use of *exempla* and anecdote in the battle supports this overall assessment, and details of the account are included specifically to absolve Caesar of responsibility for the defeat.<sup>20</sup> However Caesar also describes his own activity in order to forestall criticism, through references to his own general diligence and foresight.<sup>21</sup> In the construction of a path between two camps, he states that after completion, even single men could make the trip between the two safely, the incidental detail establishing the adequacy of the defences.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, in his description of a journey undertaken to restore the loyalty of the Aedui, Caesar specifically states that he only took a light armed expedition.<sup>23</sup> This detail is contextualised later, when he states that the siege weapons left behind were of great use in defending the camp.<sup>24</sup> The clarification of such details conforms to the pattern of interpretation intended for the battle, and demonstrates that seemingly inconsequential details nevertheless address the objective of defending Caesar against allegations of poor command.

Where Caesar is not directly involved in problematic circumstances, he nevertheless contextualises affairs so that his own responsibilities are clearly discharged. This is

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<sup>18</sup> 3.11.2. Rice Holmes questions the manner that the troops are disposed of, if there was a real threat of an uprising. He notes that Caesar should have sent the infantry with Labienus if the Belgae and Germani were a threat. See Rice Holmes (1911) pp. 105, 109.

<sup>19</sup> See pp. 116-123 above.

<sup>20</sup> Mannerter (1995) pp. 114-115.

<sup>21</sup> Note that Caesar's defence of his conduct is highly evident in this account.

<sup>22</sup> 7.36.7.

<sup>23</sup> 7.40.1-7.40.2.

<sup>24</sup> 7.40.1-7.40.4, 7.41.3-7.41.4. Caesar summarises briefly what sounds like a major and tactically important engagement here. The camp is heavily attacked and two of the gates are even destroyed. The zeal of Fabius in preparing extra defences makes Caesar's choice a good one and suggests that the situation was well in hand in the historical event, while not obfuscating the closeness of the affair. See also 7.47 where he describes the stratagem of using muleteers as fake cavalry, and the movement of legions to the smaller camp in disguise, making it clear that this was successful in deceiving the enemy.



clearly evident in the Octodurus account, where he is not present, but nevertheless clarifies that in spite of the problems his subordinate faces, there is a need for the expedition.<sup>25</sup> As he states:

Causa mittendi fuit, quod iter per Alpes, quo magno cum periculo magnisque cum portoriis mercatores ire consueverant, patefieri volebat. huic permisit, si opus esse arbitraretur, uti in his locis legionem hiemandi causa conlocaret.<sup>26</sup>

Here Caesar describes an example of sound decision-making by himself. There is the rationalisation for these decisions in the repetition of *causa*, the use of *volo* and the subjective use of *opus esse*, all of which capture his thought processes.<sup>27</sup> He introduces the campaign with the process of his own thinking, and in doing so, discharges his own responsibilities for the events that follow, by showing the necessity of the expedition.

Caesar's concern for his own conduct is further evident in the Octodurus campaign, as he includes details that are no longer referenced once they have illustrated his diligence. He states that he sent cavalry with the commander Galba, so that it is clear what complement of forces Galba set out with.<sup>28</sup> However he only provides the minimum detail necessary, stating that they were *parte equitatus*, and then he omits any further mention of them in the battle that follows.<sup>29</sup> Even during the flight of the enemy the cavalry are not mentioned, nor is there any reason given why they might not have contributed.<sup>30</sup> As with the Nervii account, where two whole legions are dropped from the battle once they serve the narrative purpose, in this instance the cavalry disappear from the account entirely.<sup>31</sup> In the Octodurus narrative the units appear in order to explain Caesar's own conduct, and disappear when they are no longer required to illustrate his diligence.

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<sup>25</sup> See above pp. 88-111. The more notable example of the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta is discussed below at pp. 319-339 and at pp. 209-213 above.

<sup>26</sup> 3.1.2-3.1.4.

<sup>27</sup> All these words reflect the reasoning of Caesar, *causa* establishing the cause, *opus esse* the necessity, and *volo* the desire itself.

<sup>28</sup> 3.1.1. This shows how Caesar promotes his own attention to detail as commander.

<sup>29</sup> See 3.1-3.6.

<sup>30</sup> 3.6.2-3.6.3.

<sup>31</sup> See pp. 202-203 above.

More importantly, Caesar openly states when a battle occurs against his own directives, demonstrating his intention to make clear when circumstances occur through no fault of his own. This is apparent in the defeat of Sabinus and Cotta, in which the arguments of Cotta are used to show clearly that the commanders should have stayed in camp.<sup>32</sup> Caesar thereby discharges his responsibility for the massacre and clearly attributes it to a decision of Sabinus.<sup>33</sup> The use of Cotta as a mouthpiece for his own opinion contextualises affairs in order to defend Caesar by illustrating the commander would not have made such a decision.

The objective of explaining and defending conduct is even evident in the Sabis River account, which is described as a victory. Caesar is thorough in demonstrating his own foresight in order to defend any problematic aspects of his activity.<sup>34</sup> In spite of the narrative purpose of building tension, he also describes his own preparations to illustrate that the lack of preparation was not due to negligence on his part.<sup>35</sup> In this regard he shows that he was naturally cautious in such circumstances:

Caesar equitatu praemisso subsequebatur omnibus copiis. sed ratio ordoque agminis aliter se habebat ac Belgae ad Nervios detulerant. nam quod hostibus adpropinquabat, consuetudine sua Caesar sex legiones expeditas ducebat; post eas totius exercitus impedimenta conlocarat; inde duae legiones quae proxime conscriptae erant totum agmen claudebant praesidioque impedimentis erant.<sup>36</sup>

As he states, he followed a standard practice in enemy territory of reorganising the marching order, clearly indicating that he was prepared for a potential attack.<sup>37</sup> This statement follows a series of passages that focus on building tension, indicating that

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<sup>32</sup> See 5.28.3-5.28.4 where Cotta expresses Caesar's wishes that they stay in camp. See below at pp. 319-339 and at pp. 209-213 above on the representation of Sabinus, in particular pp. 335-339 below on how the Quintus Cicero siege shows the correct action. While staying in the camp was never specifically stated as the correct course of action, Cicero saved his command by doing so, and Sabinus, the poor commander was the one who advocated leaving.

<sup>33</sup> See 5.52.4-5.52.6 where Caesar condemns the folly of Sabinus.

<sup>34</sup> Lendon (1999) p. 317 does not account for this in his analysis of the Sabis River account. However he does recognise that there is a literary aspect to the account. Brown (1999) p. 332 notes the objective. See also Rambaud (1966) p. 165.

<sup>35</sup> Görler (1980) pp. 24-26 argues that these two contradictory objectives determine the narrative. See pp. 66-71 above on tension and suspense in the Sabis River narrative.

<sup>36</sup> 2.19.1-2.19.4.

<sup>37</sup> See 2.19. Note how this is a rare example of marching order, and therefore appears to be included specifically to defend Caesar from the initiation of negligence.

even when Caesar promotes a victory, he is still careful to defend himself against intimations of negligent conduct.<sup>38</sup> The passage describes Caesar's precautions, mitigating any implication of misconduct that might be raised due to the events described. As with the other details examined in this section, the content appears to be included to forestall any criticism of the commander.

### **Inconclusive Victory in Britain**

The first inconclusive campaign of the *Bellum Gallicum* that is described in detail is the invasion of Britain, and it affords an opportunity to see how battle and campaign work in conjunction to protect Caesar from criticism. This objective is apparent as battle and other military information appear to defend the inability to achieve lasting results, and support his decision to leave the island with limited success.<sup>39</sup> This lack of a long term result must have presented a problem for Caesar in narrating the account, as his presentation of the landing itself, as examined in Chapter Four, drew attention to the expedition as a great achievement.<sup>40</sup> Caesar appears to address the lack of overall success by emphasising the unusual problems of the campaign, presenting the inconclusive result as due to the formidable circumstances faced. Scholars have noted that the historical context of the invasion provided little material gain for Rome, and what is notable about the account is that there is no effort to pretend there was any long term success.<sup>41</sup> He does not hide the problem, stating at the end that only two of the defeated tribes sent hostages, effectively admitting that the campaign was a failure at least as far as subjugating the enemy.<sup>42</sup> Instead, battle narrative and contextual details defend Caesar's inability to achieve a conclusive victory, by focussing on the unprecedented nature of the difficulties faced, and the vulnerability of the Romans while in Britain. Combat concentrates on the unusual nature of the enemy, the novelty of their customs and their advantages in battle. The narrative concludes with a battle

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<sup>38</sup> As the precaution is essentially a passive activity, Caesar's literary objective of making the Nervii the aggressor is not undermined. See pp. 192-204 above.

<sup>39</sup> On problems with the historical campaign see Rambaud (1966) p. 98-100, Richter (1977) pp. 118, 123. See Goldsworthy (2006) p. 285. See also Stevens (1952) pp. 14-16.

<sup>40</sup> 4.20-4.26. See pp. 245-260 above.

<sup>41</sup> See his note on the failure of tribes to send hostages 4.38.4-4.38.5.

<sup>42</sup> See 4.36.2 for Caesar's immediate reason being related to the onset of winter, and 4.36.1-4.36.2 for the legates sent. See also 4.38.4-4.38.5 where he states only two tribes sent hostages. See 5.1-5.23 for the second invasion. See Plutarch's assessment *Caesar* 23. See also Dio 38.52-38.53 who is more critical.

that recognises a minor victory, but in contrast to other battles this account downplays any significance, exonerating Caesar from the stigma of failure by reinforcing the idea it was a struggle to achieve any sort of result. Furthermore, through the details provided he shows that he exercised sound judgement in his attention to detail. Caesar's concern to explain his conduct regarding the episode appears integral to the military data presented and the reconstruction of combat.

The narrative appears to exonerate Caesar from failure by demonstrating that at the time it was not possible to resolve affairs conclusively. In order to show how difficult it was to resolve affairs in Britain, a long list of logistical problems is provided, such as how tides destroyed his ships, there were no supplies for fixing them, winter was approaching and that the army was in danger due to a lack of food.<sup>43</sup> All these details are included throughout the narrative, but he uses the mechanism of examining the enemy motivation to reinforce and summarise these points:

Quibus rebus cognitis principes Britanniae, qui post proelium ad Caesarem convenerant, inter se conlocuti, cum et equites et naves et frumentum Romanis deesse intellegerent et paucitatem militum ex castrorum exiguitate cognoscerent, quae hoc erant etiam angustiora quod sine impedimentis Caesar legiones transportaverat, optimum factu esse duxerunt rebellione facta frumento commeatuque nostros prohibere et rem in hiemem producere, quod his superatis aut reditu interclusis neminem postea belli inferendi causa in Britanniam transiturum confidebant. itaque rursus coniuratione facta paulatim ex castris discedere et suos clam ex agris deducere coeperunt.<sup>44</sup>

Caesar provides extensive reasons why these tribes decide to fight, but in doing so he establishes conditions previously stated regarding the lack of ships, food and the onset of winter. He even elaborates on the seasonal danger with the enemy's strategy of prolonging the fight into winter, illustrating that a description of enemy motivation is used to strengthen his proposition that the campaign was particularly arduous, through repetition of the issues faced.

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<sup>43</sup> For the initial assessment, see 4.29.4. See also generally 4.28 and 4.31 where he is very clear about the problems faced.

<sup>44</sup> 4.30.1. See Görler (1976) p. 111 on the narrative shift.

Importantly, the issue of motivation appears as an apparently independent verification of Caesar's own opinion with regard to the circumstances. As the use of words for perception such as *cognitis*, *intellegent*, *cognoscerent* and *confidebant* illustrate, he strongly focuses on their perspective, providing an ostensibly independent assessment of his own opinion.<sup>45</sup> The information is an internal witness verification that reinforces the conditions as accepted by all participants to the conflict.<sup>46</sup> In this case the perspective of the enemy and their motivation not only reiterates the challenges but appears to independently verify the information, thereby supporting the Roman commander's assessment.

This examination of motivation is particular evidence that Caesar is defending his conduct of the war, as it is highly selective and designed to only address the campaign problems. The repetition of details are apparently good reasons for the enemy to renew hostilities, but nevertheless do not mention any other conditions that may have motivated them, such as resentment at an invading force or revenge for the defeat at the initial landings.<sup>47</sup> A chance to categorise enemy actions as criminal, and the opportunity to condemn their deceit is neglected in the interests of the general narrative scheme.<sup>48</sup> The examination of motivation is purely logistical, as Caesar appears only interested in conveying the most problematic aspect of the campaign, and only reinforces the conditions of importance to his explanation.

Much of the account seems designed to mitigate Caesar's inability to conclusively defeat the enemy, and in this regard considerable effort is given to explain the lack of cavalry and that this absence is not due to the commander's negligence. He provides precise numbers to demonstrate that he was exceptionally diligent regarding his cavalry, such as the information that the ships containing these forces were delayed by the wind eight miles from the point of embarkation.<sup>49</sup> While the distance is ultimately

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<sup>45</sup> 4.30.1-4.30.3. See Martin Jr. (1965) p. 64 on 1.31 and independent assessment.

<sup>46</sup> Caesar is writing the account so there is no independent assessment, but this is disguised by making the statement not a direct reiteration of his logistical state, but as part of the enemy's motivation for war.

<sup>47</sup> See 4.23-4.26 and pp. 254-260 above on Caesar's representation of the beach landing.

<sup>48</sup> Contrast the presentation of the Usipetes and Tencteri, which emphasises perfidy. See 4.13 and below at pp. 309-313.

<sup>49</sup> 4.22.4-4.22.5.

not relevant to the failure of the cavalry to appear, it does serve as an example of the commander's attention to their status and location.<sup>50</sup> The attention to detail shows that he is well aware of the problem, and wishes to communicate the issue precisely so that the audience understands his concern.

Furthermore, an extended description of chariot warfare enhances the idea that this expedition faced unusual and particularly unique dangers overall, by describing general conditions under which the Romans fought. The amount of detail regarding the enemy fighting style indicates the importance he attaches to the general effects of this novel form of warfare.<sup>51</sup> As Caesar states:

Genus hoc est ex essedis pugnae: primo per omnes partes perequitant et tela coniciunt atque ipso terrore equorum et strepitu rotarum ordines plerumque perturbant, et cum se inter equitum turmas insinuaverunt, ex essedis desiliunt et pedibus proeliantur. Acreage interim paulum ex proelio excedens atque ita cirrus colorant, ut, si illi a multitudini hostium premature, expedite ad suos receptor habitant. ita mobilitatem equitum, stabilitatem peditum in proeliis praestant ac tantum usu cotidiano et exercitatione efficiunt, uti in declivi ac praecipiti loco incitatos equos sustinere et brevi moderari ac flectere et per temonem percurrere et in iugo insistere et inde se in currus citissime recipere consuerint.<sup>52</sup>

This is a general description only, as indicated by *Genus hoc est ex essedis pugnae*, and the use of *si* is illustrative of how it describes potential activity.<sup>53</sup> Also, it is unclear who the *equitum turmas* are supposed to be.<sup>54</sup> The relationship of this passage to the historical situation is therefore ambiguous and the techniques are only broadly

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<sup>50</sup> Caesar is also clear that when they finally leave, they do so in clear weather. See 4.28.1-4.28.2. He is also precise regarding ships lost at 4.31 and the twelve ships lost in a high tide. Caesar's accuracy with ship numbers is at odds with his apparently cavalier attitude to other numeric factors, and demonstrates his attention to the aspect of logistics that support his self-presentation. See also 4.23.5.

<sup>51</sup> 4.33.1-4.33.3. See 4.34.1 for the effects. John (2002) p. 36 notes the vividness of the passage.

<sup>52</sup> 4.33.1-4.33.3.

<sup>53</sup> At 5.16 there is another passage on why the enemy are superior with chariots, which is consistent with the conditions described here. See also 1.48.4-1.48.7 discussed above at pp. 148-149 and 2.6.1-2.6.4 discussed at pp. 174-175. Also see 4.2.2-4.2.5 for descriptions of foreign fighting techniques utilised to support Caesar's objectives in the Usipetes and Tencteri account, discussed below at pp. 300-301, 308-309.

<sup>54</sup> The confusion arises as it is unclear whether Caesar is describing combat specifically related to this encounter or a generic one, as only general conditions are mentioned. Note the number of times he refers to the missing cavalry as he has described how most were missing at 4.23.2, 4.26.5, and 4.28.1-4.28.3.

related to the course of combat. This lack of clarity derives from an objective of only describing the problematic tactics adopted by the enemy, to defend the overall inconclusive result against such forces.

Caesar only provides the essential details regarding the chariot attack, and his preference is for the unusual dangers present in such a situation and the vulnerability of the Romans in combat. Some circumstances are described, such as the enemy hidden in the woods and the element of surprise this gives them against Romans dispersed for foraging.<sup>55</sup> However, the text devoted to the actual movement of forces is very brief.<sup>56</sup> Instead Caesar mentions the legion's discomfort at the novelty of the fighting techniques, indicated by the word *novitas* regarding enemy chariots.<sup>57</sup> This focus on the novel, with little contextual information on the actual battle shows that combat is determined by the need to accentuate difficulties peculiar to the undertaking.

The description of chariot warfare also appears to defend his inability to conclusively defeat the enemy, as it only describes the advantages of this style of fighting. The description is primarily of enemy capabilities, in particular the skill of the charioteers, such as their manoeuvrability on rough terrain and their ability to stand on the yokes. Importantly, the passage focuses on their ability to flee, which is directly relevant to the failure to successfully pursue the enemy after successful battles.<sup>58</sup> In contrast to the general advantages ascribed to these forces, Caesar does not detail how effective they are in hand-to-hand combat, a particularly important omission as once on foot it is unlikely charioteers could mass in sufficient numbers to match the close order of a Roman cohort.<sup>59</sup> The omission of such data suggests he only includes the strength of the chariots and their manoeuvrability, at the expense of any analysis that might

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<sup>55</sup> 4.32.4-4.32.5.

<sup>56</sup> Only at 4.32.5 does Caesar describe movement and casualties.

<sup>57</sup> 4.34.1. See pp. 247-250 above on the idea of the unusual.

<sup>58</sup> See Bradley (2009) p. 1077. Bradley argues that the strength of chariots lies in their mobility at a strategic level. Not only does Bradley's article support the idea that the strength of Britons was in their ability engage in indirect warfare, but it also supports the contention of this study that Caesar's main concerns with his enemies were at a strategic, not tactical level and that this is the main focus of the commentaries on Britain. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 57, Goldsworthy (1996) pp. 228-235.

<sup>59</sup> Even if, as Caesar states, the enemy dismounted to fight, it is unlikely that they could have gathered enough men in close proximity to approximate a Roman cohort without creating vulnerabilities either to flanking from other cohorts, or to their chariots and drivers. The key to victory would therefore be numerical superiority, which Caesar does not refer to as an issue.

indicate weakness in their technique.<sup>60</sup> The description is designed to support the proposition that this was a particularly challenging war which was hard to conclude due to the mobile nature of the enemy.

The narrative also includes a general impression of vulnerability in the campaign, and the chariot battle uses a sequence that reflects an evolving sense of danger:

Nam quod omni ex reliquis partibus demesso frumento una pars erat reliqua, suspicati hostes huc nostros esse venturos noctu in silvis delituerant. tum dispersos depositis armis in metendo occupatos subito adorti paucis interfectis reliquos incertis ordinibus perturbaverant, simul equitatu atque essedis circumdederant.<sup>61</sup>

As the use of *nam* indicates, Caesar does not adopt a temporally linear account of battle, but one that evolves from subjective impression to statements of actual conditions. In doing so, he ends with the clear picture of the dire situation in which the legion finds itself, using tension and an escalating understanding of events to reinforce the atmosphere of danger.<sup>62</sup> The combat narrative is thus organised to evoke the peril of the situation through a gradual revelation that illustrates his limited ability to control affairs.

Even the description of contextual information, such as numbers, is used to reinforce this impression of vulnerability, and help explain the inability to completely defeat the enemy. Caesar states his reasons for fighting a later battle that:

Caesar etsi idem quod superioribus diebus acciderat, fore videbat, ut si essent hostes pulsi, celeritate periculum effugerent, tamen nactus equites circiter XXX, quos Commius Atrebas de quo ante dictum est secum trans portaverat, legiones in acie pro castris constituit.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> See *Bell Alex* 75.2.1-75.3.1 for how swiftly chariots can be disposed of as a threat, as is evident in the statement *quae tamen celeriter multitudine telorum opprimuntur*. The types of chariots were most likely very different; however the use of missiles to repel them should be common to Roman forces.

<sup>61</sup> 4.32.4-4.32.5.

<sup>62</sup> See Grillo (2011) pp. 243-253 on techniques of narration. Also see the introduction of information regarding the Helvetii and the Nervii discussed at pp. 60-70.

<sup>63</sup> 4.35.1-4.35.2.



The fact that he resolves to fight is attributed to the presence of the thirty cavalry, as he mentions this just prior to this decision. The precise number seems inadequate to explain why he would face a force that has proven itself so superior at manoeuvre, with so few of cavalry of his own. Nevertheless, the number reminds the audience of the paucity of resources available to the Romans, and by inference the advantages that pertain to the enemy. This passage shows that even while Caesar provides contextual information such as numbers, he does so to convey the lack of resources needed to successfully prosecute the campaign.

The description of the final battle in the campaign does not conclude the venture in a triumphal manner, but instead supports the identification of the problems and the reasons for the overall inconclusive result. Caesar describes the last instance of combat in the following manner:

.... commisso proelio diutius nostrorum militum impetum hostes ferre non potuerunt ac terga verterunt. quos tanto spatio secuti, quantum cursu et viribus efficere potuerunt, complures ex iis occiderunt, deinde omnibus longe lateque aedificiis incensis se in castra receperunt.<sup>64</sup>

The details are minimal, suggesting Caesar has little interest in describing the historical battle except as a reiteration of campaign circumstances.<sup>65</sup> The significance of the victory is downplayed through the avoidance of hand-to-hand combat, individual tales of courage, or even numeric accounts of casualties or participants that might draw attention to the event or make it distinctive.<sup>66</sup> What details are provided support the idea of a campaign that was particularly challenging to fight, and reiterate the ongoing problem a lack of cavalry caused.<sup>67</sup> The inability to pursue and conclusively defeat the opposition is clear in the statement: *quos tanto spatio secuti, quantum cursu et viribus efficere potuerunt*, so that the victory is qualified with a reiteration of the lack of Roman cavalry.<sup>68</sup> The limited details support the overall presentation of the campaign and why it was difficult to defeat the enemy.

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<sup>64</sup> 4.35.2-4.35.3.

<sup>65</sup> See also the Tigurini at 1.12 discussed at pp. 113-116 above.

<sup>66</sup> This is in contrast to the major battles discussed throughout this study.

<sup>67</sup> See 4.26.5 where he mentions the inability to pursue the enemy.

<sup>68</sup> 4.35.3.

This final account of battle even prioritises self-defence over reconstruction of novel or unusual circumstances. The lack of detail in this encounter comes in spite of the relatively complex nature of the combat, with enemy chariots, cavalry and an unknown number of infantry against primarily a Roman infantry force.<sup>69</sup> In particular, the Romans seem to defeat the chariots; however the manner in which this is achieved is omitted.<sup>70</sup> The lack of elaboration of an unusual situation demonstrates that even when the circumstances are novel, and lead to a Roman victory, if the details are not supportive of the main aim they are omitted. The particulars of combat in this instance are absent; probably as they do not help explain why Caesar could not conclusively defeat the enemy.

The extent to which Caesar selectively accounts for battle in Britain is evident when contrasted to an event that is described immediately after the withdrawal, where the level of detail serves to draw audience attention away from any implication of failure. On the return trip, significant information is provided regarding two ships that are grounded and attacked by the Morini in Gaul.<sup>71</sup> Approximate numbers are cited, the duration is given and extensive circumstantial details provided.<sup>72</sup> These include the formation of the Romans, the noise of the fighting and that this draws more enemy, all incidental details that make the encounter noteworthy, in spite of this being a minor confrontation in comparison to the larger forces arrayed in the battles in Britain.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, the encounter is successful, and following on from the retirement the overall affair ends in a more positive manner with details that do not detract from the objective of capturing the difficulties in Britain itself. The attention to what is an essentially a minor skirmish mitigates any negative interpretation of the British venture with an instance of highly successful combat.

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<sup>69</sup> On complexity see Kraus (2009) p. 165. In this case, Caesar has already described enemy manoeuvrability, and does not need to reiterate it with an extended narrative of battle.

<sup>70</sup> This may also be why he omitted such details in his initial account of the landing, as the enemy charioteers were beaten off and therefore not a challenge in that encounter.

<sup>71</sup> It is similar to the manner in which Caesar uses the courage of Marcus Petronius in the account of Gergovia, in order to mitigate the interpretation of defeat. For Gergovia see 7.50.3-7.50.6 and pp. 120-121 above where his role is examined.

<sup>72</sup> 4.37.1-4.37.4. Gerlinger (2008) pp. 154-157 regards the odds as an example of an unrealistic scene, however it is not possible to state this conclusively without better knowledge of how the encounter was fought. Gerlinger notes also an association with the 300 Spartans at Thermopylae.

<sup>73</sup> 4.37.1-4.37.4.

Caesar's account of combat and its attendant circumstances in the first invasion of Britain appear to be governed by an overall design to defend his conduct of the campaign. It is established through the details that his inability to achieve a lasting effect was due to circumstances that were unique to conditions in Britain, including a combination of logistical factors and the nature of the enemy. The manner in which combat is presented, the choice of details and even the results are all determined by the need to portray the expedition in this manner. While presented as a bold and unprecedented venture, he shows that it only continued for as long as the prudence of the commander deemed necessary. Caesar's actions are represented as those of a commander who was not only a bold champion of Roman interests, but also one who was wise and cautious enough to recognise a situation beyond his control.

### **The Explanation for Avaricum**

The account of Avaricum in Book Seven presents a particularly brutal event, the slaughter of an entire town, and explains it in terms of the harsh realities of war and the behaviour of the soldiers and enemy.<sup>74</sup> Ramage states that there are lines of inherent argument regarding the justification of the war in Gaul that he calls "clear, matter of fact explanation of conditions governing war and the circumstances leading up to it".<sup>75</sup> This matter of fact approach to particular aspects of war, in particular massacre, is apparent in the account of Avaricum where Caesar shows a distinct emphasis on exonerating himself from the slaughter, simply through the progress of the siege.<sup>76</sup> Siege narratives in general have been examined by scholars such as Roth and Paul, and there are certain motifs that are common to such passages.<sup>77</sup> However in the case of Caesar, the details appear to have a very specific objective, as they

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<sup>74</sup> 7.16-7.28. Contrast *Bellum Civile* 3.80.6 and the assault of Gomphi, a massacre that Caesar takes responsibility for. On ideas of justification see Riggsby (2006) pp. 157-189. Goldsworthy (2006) p. 327 states that Caesar would have said if he had ordered the massacre, which is possible considering his candid explanation of killing elsewhere such as at 3.16.4, 4.15.1-4.15.5.

<sup>75</sup> Ramage (2001) p. 148. Ramage states that philosophical ideas regarding *bellum iustum* are not addressed directly in the *Bellum Gallicum* as the work is not about theory or philosophy.

<sup>76</sup> Justification for the massacre is not as overt as in the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri. See below pp. 297-319 on justification and punitive measures, and the idea of harm done. See also 2.33 and pp. 184-192 above on the Aduatuci where the representation of the enemy may help to explain why Caesar sold them into slavery. Note that at 7.32.1 he mentions the value of the supplies taken from the town to the army.

<sup>77</sup> See Roth (2006) p. 57 on siege narratives in Livy. On the motif see also Paul (1982) p. 149. Paul notes how siege motifs influence Caesar's description of Avaricum at 7.28 and are recalled at Gergovia 7.47.

establish where responsibility lay, and limit Caesar's personal involvement in the massacre. This attribution of responsibility is evident in the context of the siege, and the structure of combat narratives that show the massacre occurred due to peculiarities of the situation, such as the ferocity of the defence, and the anger of the Roman soldiers.

Caesar contextualises the events so that the destruction of the town is a natural consequence of the war being fought and the character of the opposition. It is established in Book Two that his policy is not to grant mercy once the ram has touched the wall, and there is no apparent need to explain his conduct according to his own standards; however he still appears to include details to attribute the massacre to the vagaries of the overall campaign over his own agency.<sup>78</sup> This is evident in the description of a Gallic council, where the status of the city is established as an aberration to the general scorched earth policy undertaken by Vercingetorix.<sup>79</sup> The existence of the city stands in opposition to the general will of the enemy, for if their leader had his way, it would have been destroyed.<sup>80</sup> Even Vercingetorix, in the aftermath of the siege states that it was folly to try and defend the city, supporting the idea that it should have fallen, and that the defeat is part of the implacable nature of the conflict and the harsh nature of war.<sup>81</sup> Similarly enemy activity is described in order to explain their role in the eventual result. Caesar describes the Gauls as attempting flight, and that they intended to abandon the women and children to the Romans.<sup>82</sup> While this action does not occur, it highlights the male defenders lack of concern for their families, and that they forsake their familial responsibilities to look after their own interests.<sup>83</sup> It is clear that the massacre of women and children, while performed by the Romans, was already invited by the men of the town who would have abandoned them to the mercies of the Romans if able.<sup>84</sup> The plans of the enemy establish a context where the city's natural fate would have been to be destroyed and its population left to the mercies of the Roman soldiery.

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<sup>78</sup> 2.32.1.

<sup>79</sup> 7.14-7.15.

<sup>80</sup> 7.15.6. On Vercingetorix see pp. 260-276 above. The discussion of Vercingetorix's scorched earth strategy is in detail, and captures the desperation of the campaign. The portrayal of the town in the Gallic councils suggests that the defence was not normal or advisable.

<sup>81</sup> 7.29.4-7.29.5.

<sup>82</sup> 7.26.1-7.26.5.

<sup>83</sup> See 7.26.5 where the plan is abandoned.

<sup>84</sup> See also Paul (1982) p. 149.

Furthermore, the massacre is contextualised so that responsibility lies with the Roman soldiers. The men are given a degree of agency in the account, as is evident when they demand the signal for battle in a standoff with Vercingetorix.<sup>85</sup> As established early in the siege, the Romans are also motivated by a desire to avenge Cenabum.<sup>86</sup> Their agency is evident as it is particularly stated in the final assault that the slaughter is their act of vengeance, a repetition that draws attention to their active involvement.<sup>87</sup> Even when Caesar describes his own contribution, the reference the dangers the Romans face in prosecuting the assault shows the objectives of the soldiers in the assault on the city.<sup>88</sup> He even refers to the fruits of victory, and the *corona muralis* specifically in a speech to his men, illustrating the extent to which he wishes to capture their aims in the assault.<sup>89</sup> The Roman soldiers are given a level of agency that explains the massacre in terms of their own behaviour and motivation under the circumstances.

Caesar describes the situation as particularly desperate for the Romans, so that the destruction of the city occurs as the result of a hard fought and highly dangerous siege.<sup>90</sup> During the siege, he mentions that Vercingetorix is in close proximity to the Romans and in a well-defensible place, ensuring that the siege of the city is understood as occurring with pressure on the attackers as well as the defenders.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, spies keep Vercingetorix informed, so that the Gallic leader's superiority in terms of intelligence forms the background to activity at Avaricum.<sup>92</sup> The pressure that Vercingetorix exerts is clear when he attacks the Romans foragers, and this aspect of logistics is stressed several times so that it is apparent the Romans

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<sup>85</sup> 7.19.4.

<sup>86</sup> 7.17.4-7.17.8. This occurs even though The Carnutes may have already been defeated when Cenabum was retaken and the vengeance possibly already enacted. See 7.11.

<sup>87</sup> 7.28.4-7.28.5. Caesar is very clear to state that nobody is spared. See Ramage (2003) p. 346.

<sup>88</sup> 7.28.4. Note Caesar takes responsibility for the plan that outwits the defence at 7.27.1-7.27.3.

<sup>89</sup> 7.27.2-7.27.3. See Nordling (1991) p. 197-198. Nordling notes the similarity to Gomphi in *Bellum Civile* 3.80.6. The rewards seem justified according to the text in the face of such opposition and danger.

<sup>90</sup> Foraging and supply is an important feature of Book Seven, see 7.11, 7.14, 7.32, and for the attention to the overall difficulties at Avaricum see 7.17.2-7.17.3, 7.24.1, 7.28.4.

<sup>91</sup> 7.16, 7.18-7.21.

<sup>92</sup> 7.16.2-7.16.3. See also the Sabis River account for the use of intelligence to establish tension discussed at pp. 66-71 above.

are under considerably difficulties.<sup>93</sup> Consequently, the circumstances that establish the desperation of the situation for the Romans also illustrates that the massacre is one in which they are under particular pressure from the harsh conditions of the campaign.

The description of motivation is designed to support the idea that circumstances drive the sides towards desperate acts that culminate in the massacre. Caesar establishes the desperation of the situation for both sides by describing the Gallic perspective, and how at one point they see an opportunity to bring the entire war to a conclusion, so that pressure is on both sides, and not just the defenders.<sup>94</sup> As he states:

Cum in omnibus locis consumpta iam reliqua parte noctis pugnaretur semperque hostibus spes victoriae redintegraretur, eo magis quod deustos pluteos turrium videbant nec facile adire apertos ad auxiliandum animadvertabant, semperque ipsi recentes defessis succederent omnemque Galliae salutem in illo vestigio temporis positam arbitrantur...<sup>95</sup>

This is not just a possible victory for the Romans, but for the Gauls as well who see an opportunity to end the war. The circumstances establish the level of risk and the massacre occurs where the possibility of annihilation of either side is entertained.

More importantly, the narrative establishes the enemy as an aggressor, equal in status to the Romans as they perform the bulk of activity, so that the fundamentally offensive nature of a siege is reinterpreted.<sup>96</sup> All enemy actions come first, which are followed by Roman activity even where these must have been a massive undertaking in the actual siege, such as the construction of a ramp.<sup>97</sup> In particular, the endurance

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<sup>93</sup> 7.16.3, 7.17.2-7.17.3. Note that this does not mean the issue of logistics was not pressing in the historical context, as the narrative is self-consistent on the issue. However Caesar is giving attention to such details to explain the overall atmosphere of hardship that the men laboured under in support of his explanation for the massacre. On logistics see also 7.32.1-7.32.2, 7.55.1, 7.71.4-7.71.5, 7.74.1-7.74.2.

<sup>94</sup> 7.25.1. The enemy place all hope in this but any damage to the ramp is probably more a delaying action.

<sup>95</sup> 7.25.1.

<sup>96</sup> This bears similarity to Aduatuca see pp 188-192 above. Note that this helps Caesar establish the culpability of the defenders by contextualising them as aggressors.

<sup>97</sup> See 7.22 for aggressive sallies. Riggsby (2006) p. 80 notes how the ramp is only given a brief description.

of the soldiers in bad weather and cold is contrasted with the confidence and strength of the enemy.<sup>98</sup> The Roman activity appears as a reaction, and one of endurance under the assault of the enemy, rather than a fundamentally aggressive act of assault and siege.<sup>99</sup> The structural design establishes the siege as part of the aggressive and dangerous characteristics of the Gauls, against which the perseverance and endurance of the Romans is contrasted.

The passage also includes a description of the walls of the city, and a combat anecdote to ascribe to the defenders the implication of aggression. These passages are extensive and detailed, and the description of the walls is included not when Caesar first arrives at the scene and describes other topographical features, but at the end of the passage that contains a list of Gallic measures against the Romans.<sup>100</sup> As a symbol of Gallic aggression and industry it stands in support of the general conditions that the Romans have to endure, where the Gauls have a distinct advantage due to their position.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, the vignette of Gauls desperately attempting to burn Roman siege works, and being picked off one by one is designed to capture their intractability, and to demonstrate the ultimate necessity of their destruction:

Accidit inspectantibus nobis, quod dignum memoria visum praetereundum non existimavimus. quidam ante portam oppidi Gallus, qui per manus sebi ac picis traditas glaebas in ignem e regione turris proiciebat, scorpione ab latere dextro traiectus exanimatusque concidit. hunc ex proximis unus iacentem transgressus eodem illo munere fungebatur. eadem ratione ictu scorpionis exanimato alteri successit tertius et tertio quartus, nec prius ille est a propugnatoribus vacuus relictus

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<sup>98</sup> Contrast 7.24 with 7.25.1. The Romans come across as in an essentially defensive role here. Caesar makes the situation look disastrous, and only at the end mentions he had placed two legions to prepare for the eventuality.

<sup>99</sup> See Rondholz (2008) pp. 434-435 for the use of this technique in the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>100</sup> 7.23. See also the town of the Aduatuci discussed at pp. 185-187 above. Riggsby (2006) p. 79 notes the delayed description of the walls.

<sup>101</sup> 7.22.2-7.23.5. Kraus (2010) pp. 46-48 notes the ekphrastic nature of the wall passage and the manner this is generalised for Gaul. The extensive detail serves as part of Caesar's proposition that this is not an enemy that surrenders easily, but who is prepared to fight on. The walls are also an imposing structure and Caesar mentions their appearance for their intimidating effect. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 80, on the idea of Gallic ingenuity and development.

locus quam restincto aggere atque omni ea parte submotis hostibus finis est pugnandi factus. Omnia experti Galli, quod res nulla successerat...<sup>102</sup>

This is a notable deed, but one that reflects the desperation of both sides rather than just the defenders, and the continual attempts to destroy the ramp are illustrative of the general stakes of the battle.<sup>103</sup> The Gauls are sallying aggressively in this passage, the fundamentally offensive nature of the action contextualised as part of the many things they try to win the battle.<sup>104</sup> Like the description of the walls, the combat anecdote serves to ascribe to the defenders an essentially aggressive posture, which mitigates the idea that this is just an offensive action by the Roman army.

Importantly, Caesar's most memorable roles are that of observer. In the description of the walls, Caesar's main role is a narrator of this feature.<sup>105</sup> In the Gallic sally, the use of *inspectantibus nobis* relegates Caesar's role in this highly memorable passage to that of observer, downplaying his contribution in the unfolding action.<sup>106</sup> Caesar's main involvement is defensive, either in attempting to call off the siege, reacting to Vercingetorix, or in averting a Gallic sally.<sup>107</sup> By the time he acts aggressively in ordering the final attack, it appears like he is simply putting an end to the risks the Romans face.<sup>108</sup> Caesar's personal presence limits his own agency in the account, in comparison to the other actors described.

In his description of the reasons for the massacre, Caesar depicts escalating details of desperation in which the final massacre and destruction of the town arises from the conditions and state of each side, including a highly active, aggressive, enemy, so that responsibility is inferred naturally from the actions and circumstances under which the participants labour. The battle gives centrality to the actions of the defenders and

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<sup>102</sup> 7.25.1-7.26.1. See Kraus (2010) p. 48. Kraus notes the topos of this passage goes back to *Iliad* 12. Note also that this passage indicates Caesar's role as an observer.

<sup>103</sup> See Rawlings (1998) p. 179. Rawlings notes that this incident appears to undermine Caesar's attention to the *virtus* of his own men. However Caesar actually uses it to illustrate the conditions at the time. The reason that he states it must not be overlooked is because it shows the determination and desperation of the defenders.

<sup>104</sup> 7.26.1. Note also the lack of detail in the attack itself by the Romans at the end in 7.27. Caesar does not even mention where or how they surmounted the wall, as the emphasis is on his own observation, and the enthusiasm of the men in the face of the frustration of their labours.

<sup>105</sup> 7.23.

<sup>106</sup> 7.25.1.

<sup>107</sup> 7.17.4-7.17.8, 7.18.2-7.19.6, 7.24.5.

<sup>108</sup> 7.27.1-7.27.3.



attackers with Caesar's role merely that of observer at the most notable points. While there is no apparent reason for Caesar to defend his actions based on his own stated policy regarding sieges, the construction of the account certainly illustrates a measure of isolation of the commander from the fate of the city, and a desire to attribute responsibility to others.

### **Massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri**

The battle against the Usipetes and Tencteri develops the explanation for massacre in a more comprehensive manner, integrating aspects of the campaign and battle to address the necessity of the actions taken by Caesar. The massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri is mentioned in Suetonius and Plutarch, who state that it led to calls by Cato to have Caesar handed over to the enemy survivors.<sup>109</sup> While the dating of the episode, and therefore the requirement to address directly Cato's demand, is difficult to determine the defensiveness of the passage has been observed by Lee.<sup>110</sup> The account not only explains Caesar's action against these two tribes, but supports his decision to cross the Rhine and deal with the Germani, and analysis of battle in this section shows that the tribes are identified as part of a greater threat to Gaul.<sup>111</sup> The battle itself resolves the immediate threat that the Usipetes and Tencteri represent, most notably in the treatment of the enemy as a multitude, and in the slaughter of the women and children.<sup>112</sup> The suggestion Caesar would portray the encounter in this way is certainly supported by Cicero, who notes the justice of preventative war.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> 4.1-4.15 See Collins (1972) p. 924. See also Suetonius *Div Iul* 24.3 for the statement Caesar might have been handed over after the episode. See also Plutarch *Cat Min* 51.1-2, cf *Caesar* 22 where Plutarch gives Tanusius Ceminus as his source.

<sup>110</sup> On dating see introduction pp. 26-27. It is difficult to draw too close a link between the battle narrative and the evidence for Cato's demand, but this section shows that Caesar does address his breach of a truce by explaining the need to act pre-emptively. See 4.12 on the massacre of auxiliaries. Lee (1969) pp. 102-103 argues that the account is manipulated by Caesar and is not simply matter of fact. See also Powell (1998) pp. 124-132. For an overview of Gallic auxiliaries and an argument that they are portrayed poorly see Gerlinger (2008) pp. 297-303. This thesis by contrast examines auxiliaries as they appear in the narrative, to determine their purpose in each episode.

<sup>111</sup> On the Rhine as a divider see Riggsby (2006) pp. 64-65.

<sup>112</sup> Powell (1998) p. 129. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 159 and Cicero *de Off* 1.34-1.35 on pre-emptive action. See Rambaud (1966) pp. 120-123. See Nordling (1991) pp. 51-65, who provides an analysis, particularly in relation to Rambaud's view. On tropes such as woman and children in sieges see Paul (1982) p. 149.

<sup>113</sup> See Cicero *de Off* 1.80 on the justice of preventative war. See also 3.11 for preventative action. See 7.3 for Cenabum where Caesar reports how news of a Roman defeat spreads.

The account displays an objective of convincing the audience that Caesar was required to act against the two tribes in order to forestall a greater threat.

Caesar also includes details to indicate why he attacks while still in negotiations, as this is a problematic action he seems to need to explain, possibly again in response to Cato's demand to have him handed to the enemy.<sup>114</sup> The presentation of the enemy cavalry is particularly pertinent to this purpose, as a preliminary skirmish is constructed to demonstrate why Caesar was required to act pre-emptively, before the main body of enemy cavalry could return. As Lee argues, important information such as the cavalry skirmish exist in the narrative in order to support Caesar's explanation of his conduct.<sup>115</sup> Combat is used to establish the justice of Caesar's activity, with details included to draw attention to the deceit and injustice of enemy actions.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, while he initially appears to give the enemy the benefit of the doubt, the defeat of the auxiliaries marks a change in tone. Within it, the vignette of two brothers who die trying to save each other is particularly relevant as it illustrates a dichotomy of behaviour between Roman and Germani, and establishes that harm has been done to Roman interests.<sup>117</sup> The presentation of combat in the main encounter then addresses the punitive nature of the battle. The cavalry serve as instruments of retribution, emphasis is on subjective emotional states over physical movement, and numeric assessments are all designed to encourage this interpretation.<sup>118</sup> The preventative and punitive nature of the activity fundamentally influences the description of battle in order to justify Caesar's conduct of the campaign.

In order to understand the presentation of combat it is necessary to examine how the aftermath of the battle is described. Caesar's overall assessment suggests that the battle is part of a scheme written to prepare the audience for his next episode, the

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<sup>114</sup> Ramage (2001) p. 167 examines the negotiations. Lee (1969) p. 100 states the whole affair is designed to gain support for Caesar, but mainly analyses the story of the two brothers. Goldsworthy (2006) p. 271 says Caesar must defend his actions; however Goldsworthy does not look for supporting arguments in the battle itself. See also Powell (1998) pp. 124-132; Gerlinger (2008) pp. 108-111. Note this section examines the combat scenes, so the treatment of enemy legates, covered by the above scholars is not directly addressed. Both the treatment of the legates and Caesar's description of combat are addressed at the threat that the enemy pose. See pp. 313-319 below.

<sup>115</sup> Lee (1969) pp. 102-103.

<sup>116</sup> See Collins (1972) p. 924, on the issue. Also see Suetonius *Div Iul* 24.3. See also Plutarch *Cat Min* 51 1-2. cf. *Caesar* 22, and Appian *Celt* 18. See Rambaud (1966) p. 118-123, Gelzer (1968) p. 131. fn. 2.

<sup>117</sup> See Melchior (2004) p. 29 for the change in tone.

<sup>118</sup> For cavalry see 4.14.5; for subjective states see 4.14.2-4.14.3; for numbers see 4.15.3-4.15.4.

crossing of the Rhine.<sup>119</sup> Powell notes that like the Gomphi massacre, the historical massacre of Usipetes and Tencteri might have been part of wider campaign strategy and message.<sup>120</sup> Caesar certainly states this openly after defeating the tribes, and mentions that the whole affair makes him cognisant of the fact that he must cross the river, both to deal with the Germani as a people, and to punish the last remnants of the Usipetes and Tencteri who have escaped to the Sugambri.<sup>121</sup> Consequently this particular battle has a relationship to later activity, and should be viewed as an explanation for the later campaign against Germanic peoples.

The link to the crossing of the Rhine is evident as the peoples beyond the river take precedence over an examination of those actually faced in combat, and the context in which the battle occurs is sacrificed for an examination of the Germani in general. This is most clear at the start of the episode, where it is stated that the Usipetes and Tencteri cross the Rhine with a large host of men, but rather than describe these peoples, Caesar describes the customs of the Suebi, who prompted the migration.<sup>122</sup> He chooses to discuss the numeric strength of the Suebi rather than that of the current opponent, indicating that odds are totally unrelated to the battle itself.<sup>123</sup> He even discusses the relationship of the Suebi with the Ubii, rather than the Usipetes and Tencteri, so that the conditions that lead to the confrontation are only indirectly addressed, with the enemy faced in battle merely being portrayed as in a similar situation to the Ubii.<sup>124</sup> This passage on the customs and relations of the Germani across the river demonstrates that events are contextualised within a larger

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<sup>119</sup> *Germanico bello confecto multis de causis Caesar statuit sibi Rhenum esse transeundum* 4.16.1. See also 1.37, 1.54 where the defeat of the Germani is also related to the threat from beyond the Rhine. See Melchior (2004) p. 42. Note that Riggsby (2006) pp. 25-45 has a recent discussion on space and at pp. 47-71 on people. See also Jervis (2001) pp. 61-89 on Caesar's mapping of peoples. See Chapter Three on the representation of peoples as it applies to specific battle narratives. See also Nousek (2006) p. 70 and pp. 86-124 on rivers in general. See also Schadee (2008) pp. 169-170. See Wells (2001) p. 117 for the idea that the Rhine is not a cultural boundary during this period, at least from an archaeological perspective, and the idea that Caesar is establishing his own dichotomies.

<sup>120</sup> Powell (1998) p. 129.

<sup>121</sup> 4.16.1-4.16.3. As Ramage (2001) p. 167 notes, the campaign across the Rhine is stated as *iustissima*. See Wells (2001) on Caesar's use of the Rhine to define the boundaries of his conquest. See also Goldsworthy (2006) p. 309. See also 1.27.4 where the border is stated as the Rhine.

<sup>122</sup> *Sueborum gens est longe maxima et bellicosissima Germanorum omnium* 4.1.2-4.3.3, 4.1.3-4.1.4. On the Suebi see Schadee (2008) p. 168.

<sup>123</sup> 4.1.4-4.1.6.

<sup>124</sup> 4.4.1. Note also how it further addresses the general threat as there is an implicit possibility that other tribes might migrate unless the Suebi are dealt with. As Ramage notes, the Suebi feature prominently in both major Germani incursions, as he states, there is a "domino" effect from their activity. See Ramage (2001) p. 167 fn. 82.

framework, in which the broader context takes precedence over the Usipetes and Tencteri themselves.

The predominance of a general Germanic threat is evident as any tactical discussion is not directly associated with the enemy faced, but is portrayed as part of the broader context. The Romans only face the cavalry of the Usipetes and Tencteri in the battle; however Caesar describes fighting techniques as part of the description of the Suebi.<sup>125</sup>

Quin etiam iumentis, quibus maxime Galli delectantur quaeque impenso parant pretio, Germani importatis non utuntur, sed quae sunt apud eos nata, parva atque deformia, haec cotidiana exercitatione summi ut sint laboris efficiunt. equestribus proeliis saepe ex equis desiliunt ac pedibus proeliantur, equosque eodem remanere vestigio adsuefaciunt, ad quos se celeriter cum usus est recipiunt. neque eorum moribus turpius quicquam aut inertius habetur quam ephippiis uti. Itaque ad quemvis numerum ephippiatorum equitum quamvis pauci adire audent.<sup>126</sup>

While the Usipetes and Tencteri utilise this style of combat in one encounter with the Romans, the reference to the Germani ensures that their fighting style is placed within the context of the larger threat.<sup>127</sup> The use of the Suebi to provide these details demonstrates that tactical data has been contextualised within the broader Germanic threat and Caesar's actions against them.

The protagonists are identified according to the Germanic menace as well, in order to contextualise the actions across the Rhine. Caesar almost always refers to the Usipetes and Tencteri as Germani, and while this may be in part to simplify their description, it serves to remind the audience of their racial association.<sup>128</sup> On the battlefield he does

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<sup>125</sup> Note there is a contrast between the lateness of ethnic details in the British Invasion, discussed above at pp. 247-250, a foreign venture, and how in this case the ethnic details appear at the start of the book. Here the effect is to provide a context for understanding the Germanic nature of the threat.

<sup>126</sup> 4.2.2-4.2.5.

<sup>127</sup> See 4.12.2-4.12.3. Powell (1998) p. 124 analyses the episode and notes the guilt by association with the Suebi in the introduction to episode. See Seager (2003) pp. 30-34 on the Germanic threat in general as counter civilising.

<sup>128</sup> They are not actually mentioned by name in the battle, only at 4.1.1, 4.4.1 and after the account at 4.16.2, 4.18.4. In the encounter with Ariovistus Caesar refers to them as Germani, but there are numerous tribes involved and the simplification appears more necessary. See 1.49.1, 1.50.5, 1.51.2,

not identify the two tribes separately, much as he did with the Belgae tribes, ensuring that the layout is according to the larger ethnic categorisation.<sup>129</sup> More importantly, in his conclusion he actually calls the campaign a Germanic one, indicating that he regards the affair as part of something more widespread than only the actions of two tribal groups.<sup>130</sup> His identification of the matter according to the larger association is further indication of how the battle is conceptualised to explain his later campaign against them.

In particular the campaign is part of a pattern of danger, and details of the episode place emphasis on the effects on Gaul. Caesar takes particular care to establish that the reason for his campaign is the threat that the Usipetes and Tencteri pose to stability in Gaul.<sup>131</sup> Caesar makes clear reference to the type of stakes involved when he states:

His de rebus Caesar certior factus et infirmitatem Gallorum veritus, quod sunt in consiliis capiendis mobiles et novis plerumque rebus student, nihil his committendum existimavit.

...atque auditionibus permoti de summis saepe rebus consilia ineunt...<sup>132</sup>

The conditions are presented as part of a potential uprising, which is in a nascent stage when Caesar arrives.<sup>133</sup> He is specific that he acts to forestall this threat when he states: *Caesar, ne graviori bello occurreret, maturius quam consuevit ad exercitum proficiscitur.*<sup>134</sup> The incursion of the Usipetes and Tencteri is being assessed for its effect on Gallic morale and loyalty, and as with the Suebi, groups he is not actually

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for examples. Note however that Caesar identifies and labels Ariovistus as an individual continually throughout that encounter, in contrast to this account, where the emphasis is only on the group association.

<sup>129</sup> See pp. 81-82 on the Belgae battle, for details of how a host is identified over separate tribal groups.

<sup>130</sup> 4.16.1. Caesar's stated concerns are in regards to Germani incursions, as this section illustrates. See Lee (1969) p. 101.

<sup>131</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 158-189 in particular p. 178 for discussion and p. 159 on prevention as a justification for war.

<sup>132</sup> 4.5.1-4.5.3.

<sup>133</sup> 4.5.1-4.6.5.

<sup>134</sup> 4.6.1-4.6.2.

facing in combat are drawn into the account.<sup>135</sup> The battle is therefore part of a broader defensive campaign, associated with risks beyond the battle itself.

The episode does show the Usipetes and Tencteri as a military danger in and of themselves; however emphasis is still on the strategic threat over any tactical one they might pose in battle. This is evident as the description of logistics is directed at the landscape of Gaul.<sup>136</sup> Caesar states that when the enemy are in the lands of the Menapii: *...omnibus eorum aedificiis occupatis reliquam partem hiemis se eorum copiis aluerunt*.<sup>137</sup> The description of logistical features such as shelter and food encapsulates the danger that the Germani pose to Gaul, not just to the Roman army, as the enemy are dangerous due to their consumption of resources and appropriation of property.<sup>138</sup> In this their behaviour is similar to the Suebi, who depopulate lands in their vicinity.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, Caesar only addresses the enemy in terms of strategic and diplomatic terms, stating that the host is *tantae praesertim multitudini* it cannot be resettled easily.<sup>140</sup> By including such logistical issues, he demonstrates that his presentation is designed to focus on the broader threat, rather than the danger that the host directly presents to the Roman forces.

Consistent with this focus, the numbers of the Usipetes and Tencteri are not assessed in terms of their tactical significance. Caesar mentions on several occasions the vast size of the host of the Usipetes and Tencteri, eventually stating that they number 430,000, a huge number of men women and children that would have been larger than the Belgae host described in Book Two.<sup>141</sup> However the capabilities of such a force

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<sup>135</sup> See Lee (1969) p. 101. Lee recognises how the description of Gallic behaviour explains later actions. Caesar makes this clear at 4.13.3. See also Jervis (2001) p. 55.

<sup>136</sup> Caesar eventually refers to logistics in the Belgae campaign as an influential factor, at 2.10.4-2.10.5.

<sup>137</sup> 4.4.7.

<sup>138</sup> Note also that it is not explained why they leave the lands of Menapii. Unlike the Helvetii who state where they are going, Caesar does not clarify this detail, presumably because the threat he defines is their presence in Gaul.

<sup>139</sup> 4.3.1-4.3.3. See also Ramage (2001) p. 167 who comments on the dangers of Germanic migration in general. Note the similarity to the actions of the Suebi who devastate the lands around them at 4.3.2-4.3.3.

<sup>140</sup> 4.8.2.

<sup>141</sup> 4.15.3. Note the number of combatant numbers in both encounters is unclear, as in the Belgae battle the numbers mentioned are only those promised. For the Usipetes and Tencteri encounter, Plutarch *Caesar* 22 cites 400,000, but at *Cato* 51 cites 300,000. For the purposes of this thesis, the representation of the multitude is the critical feature of the passage as its combat elements are not listed.

are not assessed at a tactical level.<sup>142</sup> He states that the Menapii are terrified of the multitude, yet they manage to mount an initial successful defence in which the numbers of the Usipetes does not secure victory.<sup>143</sup> In contrast to an assessment of fighting ability or the dangers of the massive body of people, he chooses to direct attention to the repercussions of such a number of people on the physical and political landscape of Gaul, in order to contextualise his activity in opposing them.

This representation of the multitude and its danger to Gaul has an effect on combat, as the narrative does not address the physical circumstances of fighting such a large mass of men, women and children. As described the two tribes would have taken up a vast area, with a real danger of outflanking the Romans, or overwhelming them with numbers, however no details are present regarding these dangers, and there is no evidence of such disparity in the size of the forces.<sup>144</sup> There is also no separation of tribes, or engagement by the Romans with separate elements among the defenders.<sup>145</sup> Even the size of the Roman forces in the campaign, or on the day of battle, are absent, demonstrating a lack of concern with relative numeric factors.<sup>146</sup> The size of the host is only a secondary tactical consideration, which is apparent as it is the enemy cavalry that secure victory over the Menapii.<sup>147</sup> The specific hazards of battling such an enormous body of people have been omitted from the account, with the threat only identified at a strategic level.

The description of combat is further influenced by a desire to resolve the incursion in terms of its long term significance, through a focus on those elements of the host who

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<sup>142</sup> 1.48.5-1.48.7. See 4.3.1-4.3.3 See also pp. 71-88 above on the presentation of the Belgae as a multitude and Caesar's elaborate precautions. Note how the word *multitudo* is a word used frequently in the battle against the Belgae, and it had the effect of making Caesar cautious of engaging with the enemy, a factor that is not present in this account. See 2.8.1-2.8.3. It is possible that the number of Germanic combatants is relatively low compared to the Belgae host, but again, Caesar does not clarify the details.

<sup>143</sup> 4.4.3-4.4.7 the presence of the river seems the most likely reason for the successful defence, but Caesar does not actually state this.

<sup>144</sup> 4.14. Caesar noted that the camp of the Belgae host, which may actually have been fewer people if only the fighting men were present, was eight miles wide. 2.7.4. There is also the distinct possibility that Caesar has exaggerated the numbers, an implication suggested by the lack of a physical presence to the host in the battle narrative.

<sup>145</sup> As a comparison, Caesar's description of the battle against the Nervii breaks the description down to the level of individual legions, and follows the various fortunes across the whole battlefield, demonstrating that when he chooses, he examines a battle at a more detailed level. See 2.19-2.27.

<sup>146</sup> So far Caesar has not mentioned legion strengths anywhere in Book Four.

<sup>147</sup> 4.4.4-4.4.7. As Jervis notes, this also applies to any reputation they might have in combat, as they are "the picture of disorganisation and cowardice" in the battle. See Jervis, (2001) p. 81.

have associations with the larger threat. In the battle Caesar orders his cavalry to attack the women and children; however his description singles out the women and boys, rather than all the non-combatants such as the elderly and young girls.<sup>148</sup> He has alluded previously to the dangers of the boys, in his description of the youth of the Suebi, who are future combatants, wild and uncontrollable, and all of them potential warriors.<sup>149</sup> Consequently this selectivity in choosing them and the mothers in battle demonstrates the neutralisation of the danger posed, both in their ability to expand through procreation, and the particularly bellicose youth that will eventually become adults.<sup>150</sup> An aspect of victory in the battle appears to be directly influenced by the larger scheme of addressing the racial threat the enemy present.

Moreover the broader dimension of the conflict may have resulted in a simplified model of activity being applied to the battle, as the account omits the likely complexity regarding the flight of the combatants. The women and children, while not the only factor described in the battle, play a critical role in the narrative, as their slaughter brings about the flight of the enemy combatants.<sup>151</sup> The Germanic men act immediately as a single entity in hearing and reacting to the slaughter in the statement: *Germani post tergum clamore audito cum suos interfici viderent, armis abiectis signisque militaribus relictis se ex castris eiecerunt...*<sup>152</sup> This simple explanation ignores the probability there must have been men among such a large host who did not know of the massacre and who continued fighting for a period.<sup>153</sup> It may also omit elite units, who may have fought on due to personal codes of behaviour.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> 4.14.5. Caesar clearly identifies the women and boys even though the flight was probably a more amorphous group than this. Men must have been fleeing and the situation quite chaotic but he narrows the description to what is pertinent to his objective.

<sup>149</sup> 4.1.9-4.1.10.

<sup>150</sup> Note the absence of topos like behaviour, such as pleas for mercy. The anecdote is functional regarding the problem faced. His reference to their martial values seems deliberately associated with childhood, and resolved through the slaughter of boys in the battle. Also, as Jervis (2001) pp. 67-68 notes, the Suebi are greatly feared, and devastate regions near them. The implication is that this is a tribal custom, and there may be some interrelation between childhood training, and the propensity for devastation.

<sup>151</sup> Caesar also mentions the element of surprise, but while it allows entry into the enemy camp it does not resolve the battle. 4.14.1-4.14.4.

<sup>152</sup> 4.15.1-4.15.2.

<sup>153</sup> As suggested by the huge number of people and the likely size of the camp if Caesar is recording generally correct numbers. Note the size of the camp must have been huge, if the size of the camp of the Belgae is representative of such numbers, and line of sight not likely to be clear across the whole space.

<sup>154</sup> An example is the behaviour of an elite unit acting independently under their own commander, at 3.22, and the Nervii at 2.27 who fought on when the rest of their forces were beaten.



Nevertheless the host acts as one here and in the ensuing flight, demonstrating that activity has been distilled down to its most basic form as part of the context of an enemy incursion into Gaul.

The broader context is further evident in the rout of the enemy, as the flight directly addresses and resolves the elimination of this threat. The description of the flight to the river and the many deaths therein is used to address the initial problem posed by them crossing the Rhine in large numbers, and to resolve the account of battle at that point where Roman interests began.<sup>155</sup> As Caesar states:

At reliqua multitudo puerorum mulierumque – nam cum omnibus suis domo excesserant Rhenumque transierant – passim fugere coepit. ad quos consecrandos Caesar equitatum misit.

...se ex castris eiecerunt et, cum ad confluentem Mosae et Rheni pervenissent, reliqua fuga desperata magno numero interfecto reliqui se in flumen praecipitaverunt atque ibi timore lassitudine vi fluminis oppressi perierunt.<sup>156</sup>

The reminder of the initial crossing of the Rhine reinforces the original definition of the danger when the enemy entered Gaul. While the flight of individuals is described with the adverb *passim*, the narrative focuses on those who die in the river.<sup>157</sup> Considering the size of the host described this unitary approach to the behaviour of individuals, while possibly reflecting where the main flight occurred, illustrates that the purpose of the account is not a reconstruction of the complexities of combat, but addresses the threat to Gaul. The account ends with a reversal of the initial conditions under which hostilities arose, the incursion across the Rhine, as the purpose is to explain Caesar's response with a reminder of the conditions under which the threat arose.

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<sup>155</sup> On the thematic importance of the Rhine see Seager (2003) pp. 30-34. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 280 on the resolution of the threat.

<sup>156</sup> 4.14.5, 4.15.2-4.15.3.

<sup>157</sup> 4.15.1-4.15.3. See 1.53.1-1.53.3 for a pertinent example as the Germani under Ariovistus all flee in one direction, again, to the Rhine.

The importance of the river to the context of the narrative means that it only appears in the battle for its association with the larger threat to Gaul. The river has proximity to the battlefield only once the slaughter occurs, and the geographic relationship of the battlefield and river is not actually stated. How far the fugitives fled is unclear, with no distance or details of the cavalry pursuit given.<sup>158</sup> In contrast to this incomplete tactical reconstruction, the direct reference to the river focuses attention back on the border with the Germanic lands and peoples who are the source of the trouble and future action.<sup>159</sup> Consequently, in spite of a lack of clarity regarding the relationship of battle and river, the description of flight extends to this powerful thematic location, demonstrating that battlefield topography has been influenced by the explanation for the crossing of the Rhine.

### Pre-Emptive Action and the Cavalry Threat

In explaining the pre-emptive action against the Usipetes and Tencteri, the danger that the enemy cavalry present to the Roman forces is iterated throughout the account and has an important effect on the combat described. While the main enemy cavalry force is absent foraging during the episode, Caesar himself acts out of fear at their return, and accounts for his own activity as a reaction to this.<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, he provides details of their activity against other opponents to reinforce this danger, such as their ability to return and surprise the Menapii.<sup>161</sup> His concern to mention their speed suggests that his interest is in their ability to cause trouble through surprise attacks, establishing a fear for what might occur if they return against him.<sup>162</sup> The reiteration of the danger that the cavalry pose indicates that highlighting their influence in his decision making is important, and why he acts pre-emptively before their return.

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<sup>158</sup> The use of the Rhine as an end to the pursuit in two passages suggests the repetition of a theme regarding the neutralisation of a threat, as both passages follow the pursuit to this point, even though flight would have possibly been in several directions. See Nousek (2006) pp. 86-124 on the uses of rivers in the narrative.

<sup>159</sup> See 4.17.1-4.17.10 for the building of the Rhine Bridge.

<sup>160</sup> 4.9.3. On Germanic cavalry see Gerlinger (2008) p. 318.

<sup>161</sup> 4.4.4-4.4.7.

<sup>162</sup> The references to the foraging of the cavalry also demonstrates their ability to disrupt the environment in Gaul, which may be why Caesar specifies where they were and the fact they had crossed the river Mosa to engage in such activity. See 4.9.3, 4.12.1 for the repetition of this point. Also note that there is an extended digression on the Mosa, which is regarded by Rice Holmes as an emendation. See Rice Holmes, (1911) pp. 135-136 fn. 10. This does not affect the argument of this thesis.

In particular a cavalry skirmish with the enemy, prior to the main confrontation, marks a turning point in the narrative as Caesar states it leads to a change in his approach to negotiations.<sup>163</sup> It therefore might be expected to form part of the rationale for this change in approach, which he clarifies after the description of the skirmish:

Hoc facto proelio Caesar neque iam sibi legatos audiendos neque condiciones accipiendas arbitrabatur ab iis, qui per dolum atque insidias petita pace ultro bellum intulissent; exspectare vero dum hostium copiae auferentur equitatusque reverterentur...<sup>164</sup>

According to this passage the major consideration and justification for Caesar attacking the enemy is the skirmish, and fear of the return of the enemy cavalry. Any combat described therein might be expected to fall within the objective of supporting this decision.<sup>165</sup> The inclusion of the cavalry skirmish aids in understanding later activity, and forms part of the justification for his reaction in the overall campaign.

There is a selective analysis of the skirmish that shows how the details provided are directed at Caesar's reactions to the attack. The skirmish is provided in detail, with description of numbers, close combat and even casualties.<sup>166</sup> However the description does not extend to an explanation of why the enemy cavalry attack his men in the first place, when by his own admission it was more beneficial for them to await reinforcements.<sup>167</sup> While he has presented Germanic cavalry as confident enough to attack superior forces, he does not explain why they would be so devious while

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<sup>163</sup> 4.12.1-4.12.6.

<sup>164</sup> 4.13.1-4.13.2.

<sup>165</sup> Powell (1998) p. 126 notes that Caesar does not call the *legati* by such, and his avoidance of the proper term is a contrivance at 4.13.1. He had used the term before. Powell (1998) at p. 127 notes that the use of *summae dementiae* is to forestall critics.

<sup>166</sup> 4.12. See Collins (1972) p. 934. Collins states that Caesar gave much more time to the cavalry skirmish than he would normally have given, and even agrees that this suggests it is there for a purpose, even though he sees no suppression of the truth in the overall episode. Note that the Roman cavalry are fully recovered by the time of the main encounter with the enemy force, suggesting the effect on them was not as drastic as Caesar suggests.

<sup>167</sup> See 4.13.1-4.13.2 where Caesar admits it was better for them to wait.

negotiations might put them in a better position.<sup>168</sup> This selectivity in analysing the background to the skirmish is because the encounter is not being analysed for the event itself, but to help organise the presentation of activity in the broader scheme.

The strategic threat has a significant effect on the details provided in the skirmish, as the numbers are iterated to remind the audience of the possibility of many more arriving. As Caesar states:

At hostes ubi primum nostros equites conspexerunt, quorum erat V milium numerus, cum ipsi non amplius octingentos equites haberent, quod ii, qui frumentandi causa erant trans Mosam profecti, nondum redierant.... impetu facto celeriter nostros perturbaverunt.<sup>169</sup>

It has already been stated twice in close succession that the main cavalry element is absent, and made clear that these extra cavalry pose a serious danger should they return.<sup>170</sup> The inclusion here is therefore unnecessary, but by adding this superfluous reference Caesar uses the numeric aspect to remind his audience that there are much larger risks and concerns than the event itself.

In particular, Caesar provides the details of combat as a demonstration of the effectiveness of the Germani to support his arguments regarding the danger posed by the absent cavalry. He earlier stated the confidence and skill of Germanic cavalry with the words: *atque ad quemvis numerum ephippiatorum equitum quamvis pauci adire audent*.<sup>171</sup> The description of numbers in the skirmish, in which 800 enemy attack 5,000 cavalry is evidence of this initial contention, as they attack the vastly superior Roman forces.<sup>172</sup> In spite of inferior numbers, they also manage to rout a much larger force; so that the details of combat provide a practical example and lesson regarding what danger might be expected should the main force return.<sup>173</sup> There is an

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<sup>168</sup> Also note that Caesar does not explain why the enemy Senate would willingly hand themselves over en-masse, an action that is simply presented as part of their devious nature. See 4.13.4-4.13.6.

<sup>169</sup> 4.12.1.

<sup>170</sup> 4.9.3, 4.11.4. On repetition of specific words see Williams (1985) p. 224, Riggsby (2006) p. 110. See also pp. 63-64 above. For repetition with *Baculus* see pp. 117-119 above.

<sup>171</sup> 4.2.2-4.2.5. See also 1.15.1-1.15.4 for the effectiveness of the cavalry of the Helvetii.

<sup>172</sup> 4.12.1.

<sup>173</sup> 4.12.2-4.12.3.

implication that the enemy are highly effective even in small numbers, and would be almost unstoppable in larger numbers.<sup>174</sup> This detailed instance of combat includes an allusion to the effects of cavalry activity on a larger scale, to help justify preventative action in the conduct in the campaign.

### Germanic Perfidy and Combat

Caesar has another objective that supports his pre-emptive attack, and that is to show that he acted against an enemy that could not be trusted and could only be dealt with through force. The account of the skirmish marks a turning point in the style of narration, and the details of combat are provided to explain why Caesar's attitude changed. Up until the skirmish his ostensible objectivity is evident as the enemy are presented as victims of the Suebi, with a parallel to the friendlier tribe of the Ubii.<sup>175</sup> He only uses implication to establish villainy, such as their arrogance in conversation, or their trickery against the Menapii.<sup>176</sup> The use of indirect methods to portray the behaviour of the enemy, and their status as victims themselves, illustrates the concern to not openly condemn the Usipetes and the Tencteri at the commencement of the episode, and that an instance of combat is used to mark a change in narration.

Caesar indicates that prior to the skirmish he took all precautions to ensure a peaceful solution, showing that even though he suspected the enemy of duplicity, prior to the skirmish he was reasonable and open to a peaceful solution.<sup>177</sup> This is evident in the following passage:

...haec omnia Caesar eodem illo pertinere arbitrabatur, ut tridui mora interpositi equites eorum, qui abessent, reverterentur, tamen se non longius milibus passuum quattuor aquationis causa processurum eo die dixit...<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> See 4.12.1. Note how no enemy cavalry numbers are given in the main battle.

<sup>175</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 194 on Caesar's early treatment of the enemy. At this point Caesar's need to engage in war does not necessarily indicate a battle is inevitable, evident as he leads his army but entertains the notion that he can negotiate with the enemy to leave. See 4.8.3 for his offer to resettle the Usipetes and Tencteri. See also 4.7.4 where the Usipetes and Tencteri appeal to Caesar on the basis that they are victims. See also Ramage (2001) p. 167 for the issue of character.

<sup>176</sup> See 4.7.3-4.7.5 for an example of direct speech. Nordling (1991) p. 52 mentions how the speech appears hubristic. See 4.4.4-4.4.7 for the trickery.

<sup>177</sup> Collins (1972) p. 934 suggests Caesar had in mind arresting the legates before the cavalry attack.

<sup>178</sup> 4.11.4-4.11.5.

While he suspected a betrayal, and that the enemy were awaiting their cavalry, he describes that he made concessions, suggesting he wishes the audience to contemplate his attempts at achieving a peaceful outcome.<sup>179</sup> Consequently the presentation of negotiations prior to the skirmish draws attention to his attempts to achieve a peaceful resolution.

The presentation changes following the skirmish, and Caesar adopts a harsher approach to the issue of enemy duplicity, indicating that he uses the encounter to illustrate that the Usipetes and Tencteri cannot be trusted. Whether he always intended to actually betray the Usipetes and Tencteri is unclear, and it is difficult to determine how far the actual skirmish affected his decision making at the time, particularly as he had been open to negotiation after combat in previous encounters.<sup>180</sup> What is apparent is that the skirmish has an effect on Caesar's language, and his description of his attitude towards the Usipetes and Tencteri.<sup>181</sup> The language changes immediately afterwards, with clear words describing deceit, such as *dolum*, and *insidias* used to describe their behaviour.<sup>182</sup> His statement that it would be *summae dementiae* to wait for them to increase their forces indicates how extreme he is in presenting the situation, and how strong the language has become.<sup>183</sup> Consequently the cavalry skirmish marks a significant turning point in the way the affair is presented. The marked change in language helps to convey shock and surprise, thereby emphasising the suddenness with which the tribes can turn to betrayal, and supporting the choice of pre-emptive action.

The change that occurs is not just related to an act of betrayal by the enemy cavalry, but is extended to represent the behaviour of the enemy as a whole.<sup>184</sup> When Caesar states that the leaders turn up to negotiate, he is unequivocal in stating that is done

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<sup>179</sup> Lee (1969) p. 102. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 194 who notes how audience rapport is established at 4.11.4 (c.f. 5.28.1, 7.54.2) as Caesar states he thought the enemy only proposed a truce to recover their cavalry, but agreed to only advance for water so that "the thought shows caution even where the action doesn't".

<sup>180</sup> See Nordling (1991) p. 62 and Collins (1972) pp. 924, 934. Caesar sent legates to Ariovistus after a skirmish, even though he did not trust him. He also negotiated peace with the Aduatuci after they initially defended their town. See 1.47, 2.30-2.32.

<sup>181</sup> Melchior (2004) p. 29. Caesar shifts from moderate to aggressive language after the cavalry defeat.

<sup>182</sup> See 4.13.1, 4.13.4. See also Lee (1969) p. 103 who notes the strong language used here.

<sup>183</sup> 4.13.2.

<sup>184</sup> For group punishment also see the Tigurini at 1.12, the Venetii at 3.16, and the Aduatuci at 2.33.

with *perfidia et simulatione*.<sup>185</sup> He openly states that they are lying when he uses *fallendo* of their actions, illustrating that the cavalry skirmish allows value judgements regarding character to be more strongly advocated.<sup>186</sup> The account of the cavalry skirmish serves a role in providing justification for the harsh treatment of the Usipetes and Tencteri, as it contextualises the whole enemy as responsible.

The skirmish not only serves to highlight the danger of the cavalry noted above, but is provided to contextualise the main encounter as punitive in nature. This is achieved by establishing that harm was done, as illustrated through the use of a numeric casualty list.<sup>187</sup> Caesar rarely states the casualties among his cavalry auxiliaries in combat, notable instances of the omission evident in battles against the Helvetii and Nervii.<sup>188</sup> Consequently the description of cavalry casualties, precisely given at seventy-four men, is very unusual, particularly as it is so small compared to the total number of 5,000 present.<sup>189</sup> Nevertheless the figure gives a numeric account of the harm done, and establishes not only that the enemy attacked first, but also that they committed an *iniuria* by killing a number of individuals.<sup>190</sup> The existence of a casualty report establishes the outrage committed and the harm done, and provides evidence for a punitive response.

In particular, Caesar is careful to establish that the harm done was to Roman forces, and the details of combat, in particular a combat vignette, prepares for the context of restitution and punishment, in which the main battle is presented.<sup>191</sup> Among the casualties are two brothers, whose inclusion establishes a cost to the combat, exemplified by the deaths of identifiable Roman protagonists.<sup>192</sup> As he states:

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<sup>185</sup> 4.13.4.

<sup>186</sup> 4.13.5.

<sup>187</sup> See Lee (1969) pp. 100-103 for general support of this argument. Powell (1998) p. 125 notes the rarity of precision among Roman casualties. Powell also notes that the story of the brothers is to make the audience hostile to the enemy, through the identification of sympathetic individuals.

<sup>188</sup> See 1.24, 2.26-27 for example.

<sup>189</sup> 4.12.1, 4.12.4.

<sup>190</sup> Cicero's justifications for retaliation *de Off* 1.34 cited in Riggsby p. 159 includes the idea that harm has been done. While it is not the purpose of this paper to examine the legality of Caesar's actions, which even in antiquity were questioned, his defence of them affects battle narration. Melchior (2004) p. 17 notes generally that wounds or death require revenge or serve as pretext for aggressive activity.

<sup>191</sup> For Caesar's identification with Rome's interests see Hall (1998) p. 12. Melchior (2004) p. 39 notes a similar justification in the Ariovistus account at 1.39.

<sup>192</sup> See Lee (1969) p. 102 who notes the overall persuasive purpose of the combat vignette and story of the two brothers.

In his vir fortissimus Piso Aquitanus amplissimo genere natus, cuius avus in civitate sua regnum obtinuerat, amicus ab senatu nostro appellatus. hic cum fratri intercluso ab hostibus auxilium ferret, illum ex periculo eripuit, ipse equo vulnerato deiectus, quoad potuit, fortissime restitit; cum circumventus multis vulneribus acceptis cecidisset atque id frater, qui iam proelio excesserat, procul animadvertisset, incitato equo se hostibus obtulit atque interfectus est.<sup>193</sup>

The Senate named Piso's grandfather a friend, so the details provided on him define the harm as to Roman allies.<sup>194</sup> The story of the two brothers is not just a noteworthy tale, but gives a Roman dimension to the already individual count of the dead.<sup>195</sup> The choice of vignette demonstrates that the details of combat reinforce the concept that the main encounter is a retributive act on behalf of the state.

Moreover the description creates a tone of outrage by establishing a moral dimension to the harm done, so that the combat vignette further reinforces the justification for retributive action. The manner in which Caesar highlights this vignette establishes the familial relationship between the brothers and establishes their deaths as acts of filial piety, devotion and courage.<sup>196</sup> Only one brother is named, the other merely noted as a relation.<sup>197</sup> The actions of the two brothers serve as an exemplar of the familial relationship and epitomise Roman values and behaviour, particularly *pietas*.<sup>198</sup> The combat evokes highly parochial values, in order to establish sympathy for the defeated, and set the enemy actions against these values, thereby garnering support for the harsh response.

The presentation of the cavalry skirmish is designed to highlight barbaric methods of fighting and the ruthlessness of this enemy. Caesar is very clear that the Germani are both foreign and brutal, capturing not only their ethnic nature but also their character in the statement: *rursus his resistentibus sua consuetudine ad pedes desiluerunt*

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<sup>193</sup> 4.12.4-4.12.6.

<sup>194</sup> 4.12.4-4.12.5.

<sup>195</sup> Caesar does this elsewhere to establish the perfidy of the enemy, such as the description of C. Valerius Procillus at 1.47.1-1.47.5 who is described according to his Roman affiliation.

<sup>196</sup> 4.12.4-4.12.6.

<sup>197</sup> 4.12.5-4.12.6. The reference to *frater* is made twice.

<sup>198</sup> See also the Nervii, and *virtus* discussed at pp. 192-204 above.



*subfossisque equis compluribusque nostris deiectis reliquos in fugam coniecerunt.*<sup>199</sup>

The enemy are behaving according to racial behaviour when Caesar states *sua consuetudine*, establishing it is particular to these people.<sup>200</sup> The description of men alighting to stab the bellies of horses that follows is unusually graphic in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and while it ostensibly describes a method for fighting cavalry, the violence of this technique is described precisely when Caesar wishes to distinguish his enemy as brutal and foreign.<sup>201</sup> In this respect the skirmish helps to define the protagonists and establishes the context in which the response should be considered.

### Caesar's Punitive Response

Having established the perfidy of the Usipetes and Tencteri, and the nature of the harm done, Caesar also prepares the audience for the battle to be regarded as an act of necessary destruction, as he stresses the issue of law through force of arms.<sup>202</sup> The enemy legates state this principle thus: *...vel sibi agros attribuant, vel patiantur eos tenere quos armis possederint...*<sup>203</sup> The legates state that right comes through force of arms when they argue that what they took by force should be granted to them. Even Caesar replies to them in these terms, when he rebuts them with the idea that they have no right to new lands when they cannot hold onto their own.<sup>204</sup> Consequently action through force of arms is part of the ethos in which the events of this episode should be contemplated.

Caesar has the Usipetes and Tencteri themselves state clearly that they live by these principles, so that the slaughter of the battle is a fitting solution to their behaviour. As he states: *...sese unis Suebis concedere, quibus ne di quidem immortales pares esse possint; reliquum quidem in terris esse neminem quem non superare possint...*<sup>205</sup> They indicate that they only respect those who defeat them, as they defer only to past

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<sup>199</sup> 4.12.2.

<sup>200</sup> Lee (1969) p. 103.

<sup>201</sup> Note the treatment of cavalry skirmishes at 1.24.5 and 2.19.7 where the information is only summarised, in marked contrast to this particular passage. Collins (1972) p. 934 only states that the passage is longer than normal.

<sup>202</sup> See Gerlinger (2008) pp. 274-282.

<sup>203</sup> 4.7.4-4.7.5.

<sup>204</sup> 4.8.1-4.8.2.

<sup>205</sup> 4.7.5.

enemies. They even ask for no quarter, effectively inviting the treatment they eventually receive.<sup>206</sup> Consequently their annihilation in combat is established as part of the code of conduct that they are experienced with and accept.

Caesar encapsulates the principle that the massacre is a just imposition of force in his summation, which alludes to the idea that his actions are legitimate since they are superior to other forms of treatment that the enemy could expect.<sup>207</sup> He illustrates this in his description of the fate of the legates after the battle, when he states:

Caesar iis, quos in castris retinuerat, discedendi potestatem fecit. illi supplicia cruciatusque Gallorum veriti, quorum agros vexaverant, remanere se apud eum velle dixerunt. his Caesar libertatem concessit.<sup>208</sup>

Rather than face torture at the hands of the Gauls, the legates feel safer staying with Caesar even though he has just massacred their people.<sup>209</sup> As he reveals in his closing statement, once punishment and the elimination of the threat have occurred, his is the superior brand of justice that even the enemy prefer to local principles.<sup>210</sup> The presentation of their desires in this manner demonstrates that the summation is used to establish that his actions are controlled, necessary and possibly even understood by the defeated.

Combat within the battle is included to capture these principles of justice and necessity at the expense of clarity. This is evident in the treatment of the Roman cavalry, whose role is simplified to associate them with the dispensation of the punitive measures. The manner the cavalry came to be involved in the battle is omitted, and how they came from the rear of the army, where they were placed after

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<sup>206</sup> See 4.7.3-4.7.4 for the legates asking for no quarter. Caesar effectively obliges them by wiping out their people, suggesting that the battle and conversations prior to it have been structured together so that such statements by the enemy are answered in the battle. Consider Ariovistus' boasts about *virtus* and Caesar's response in battle discussed at pp. 146-161 above.

<sup>207</sup> See also Lee (1969) p. 103 who notes how Caesar invites the audience to consider why the Usipetes and Tencteri prefer his system of justice.

<sup>208</sup> 4.15.4-4.15.5.

<sup>209</sup> Melchior (2004) p.18 states "Caesar is composing history that will comfort rather than confound". Note that Melchior does not specifically address the Usipetes and Tencteri, and as the complexity of this episode illustrates, the objective of battle narrative can be more complex than revenge.

<sup>210</sup> On *iustus* in general see Ramage (2003) pp. 347-348. Note the word is not specifically used here.

the skirmish, to an instrumental position in battle is not accounted for.<sup>211</sup> Their only mention in the battle is when they are sent against the women and children, briefly described as: *ad quos consecrandos Caesar equitatum misit*.<sup>212</sup> In doing so Caesar omits a great deal of activity, such as how the cavalry move around the mass of fighting men to attack the non-combatants. Nor does he discuss any dangers they might have faced in the actual battle, particularly in view of the effectiveness of the Germanic cavalry.<sup>213</sup> In contrast to all this potential activity that could be described to clarify battlefield conditions, Caesar makes them an instrument of destruction as he closely associates them with his own order.<sup>214</sup> The lack of a complete account of cavalry activity suggests a thematic purpose, as it enables an interpretation of their contribution as the implementation of a required measure at the orders of the Roman commander.

The presentation of motivational factors also establishes that the battle is in response to enemy perfidy. This is most evident in the presentation of the Romans, as morale in combat is governed by the punitive context. Caesar states: *milites nostri pristini diei perfidia incitati in castra inruperunt*.<sup>215</sup> His soldiers are given one single motivation, that of justified anger.<sup>216</sup> While the mention of the cavalry skirmish may well have been used to inspire the army prior to the historical combat, the whole army is attributed with one motivation that is synchronous with the thematic purpose.<sup>217</sup> The description of motivation provides an explanation for success, while reinforcing the thematic concerns of the passage regarding Caesar's need for action.

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<sup>211</sup> 4.13.6. The last mention of the cavalry was when they were placed in rear of the army after the skirmish, and Caesar gives no information on his change in attitude towards their reliability. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 280.

<sup>212</sup> 4.14.5.

<sup>213</sup> 4.15.1. The cavalry must move around the enemy forces to attack the rear, as the flight began *post tergum*, thus exposing and presumably isolating them. It should be noted that the same cavalry odds that applied in the skirmish are applicable here, if the enemy had time to organise their cavalry, which is possible considering that a defence was mounted among the wagons.

<sup>214</sup> He does not explain the motivation of the cavalry, or their recovery from the defeat of the previous day. The use of the cavalry in the historical event may have helped restore any morale lost due to the skirmish. However Caesar does not mention any such factor as his focus on himself and justice, not on the men's motivation in seeking revenge, which he has covered at 4.14.3-4.14.4.

<sup>215</sup> 4.14.3-4.14.4. See also Lee (1969) p. 103.

<sup>216</sup> See also Avaricum 7.28.4-7.28.5.

<sup>217</sup> Note that the cavalry were auxiliaries, and may even have been only recently recruited as Caesar suggests at 4.7.1. How far the legions would have cared or identified with their losses, small as they were, in the skirmish is unclear.

More importantly, this motivation is used to replace the physical manner in which the Romans take the camp, so that the punitive aspect of the event takes precedence over the description of the assault itself. Caesar does not mention his actual orders to his legates, except the justification for battle and the need for haste, demonstrating how he is not concerned to capture in detail any tactics he used or orders he may give on the day.<sup>218</sup> The state of mind of Caesar's men comes at the expense of the manner in which they advance against the enemy, or enter the encampment.<sup>219</sup> The passage therefore supports the thematic concerns but does so at the expense of the physical activity, demonstrating that the imposition of the punitive measure determines the nature of the account, and has replaced an explanation of the movement of troops against the position.

Caesar takes particular care to establish the status of the enemy as recipients of punitive actions, by stressing morale factors that achieve this effect. He explains the surprise he enjoys in the battle as due to his speed of action, which captures the Germani unprepared.<sup>220</sup> As he states: *...copiasne adversus hostem ducere an castra defendere an fuga salutem petere praestaret. quorum timor cum fremitu et concursu significaretur...*<sup>221</sup> The emphasis on surprise enables the defenders to be described in a manner that dwells on their dismay and fear, as the use of *perturbantur* illustrates.<sup>222</sup> However Caesar also describes them as *perterriti*, and states of their fear that *cum fremitu et concursu significaretur*.<sup>223</sup> The details of their fear may be elaboration not just for its significance, but to capture the dismay of the perpetrators just prior to their destruction.

The effect of the retributive theme on combat is evident as the presentation of Germanic motivation, as with Roman morale, comes at the expense of analysis of their physical activity. Caesar presents the suddenness of his attack as almost complete, and the impression is that the defenders resist haphazardly among the

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<sup>218</sup> 4.13.3-4.13.4.

<sup>219</sup> The emphasis is on the psychological effects and states rather than physical progress.

<sup>220</sup> 4.14.1-4.14.2.

<sup>221</sup> 4.14.2-4.14.3.

<sup>222</sup> 4.14.2.

<sup>223</sup> 4.14.3.

wagons of their camp.<sup>224</sup> Nevertheless he later describes them as if they were fighting in organised units, an idea suggested as they abandon their standards when forced to flee.<sup>225</sup> The level of organisation in the resistance is therefore unclear, as the concern is not with the actual nature of the defence, but with the status of the enemy as recipients of a punitive measure.

The presentation of the aftermath and the result of battle also show how the content has been chosen to present the affair as punitive in nature. Caesar states after the flight of the enemy:

Nostri ad unum omnes incolumes perpaucis vulneratis ex tanti belli timore, cum hostium numerus capitum quadringentorum triginta milium fuisset, se in castra receperunt.<sup>226</sup>

The total absence of Roman casualties is commensurate with an act of punishment, as the infliction of damage is entirely one sided, similar to the manner the Tigurini were defeated where no Roman casualties were described.<sup>227</sup> This is an unlikely situation considering the numbers of Germani cited, and Caesar's own previous explanation of the difficulties of fighting among the wagons of the Helvetii, where the defence of the camp was particularly fierce.<sup>228</sup> However the lack of Roman casualties serves to emphasise the punitive aspect, as retribution is inflicted in a one sided manner and is only nominally resisted.

Furthermore, enemy casualties are given as the total number of people, rather than in terms of their fighting strength, further indicating that the casualty report is used to

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<sup>224</sup> 4.14.2-4.15.5. Note that they only slowly begin to resist, and the statement that they do not know whether to fight or flee, while it could be an attempt to capture their thoughts could also indicate the action of disparate elements within the camp.

<sup>225</sup> 4.15.1. The statement may indicate that the standards were left behind and the Germani never organised around them, or that they abandoned their positions, however Caesar does not specify either.

<sup>226</sup> 4.15.3-4.15.4.

<sup>227</sup> See also Caesar's presentation of the Tigurini at 1.12, which is similar in style and purpose, and pp. 113-116 above. Also note that the enemy only resist briefly. This might be expected of perpetrators being punished. Note that the lack of Roman casualties justifies Caesar's decision as it shows that he was right to surprise attack and thus save Roman lives. See also Riggsby (2006) p. 176. Note also the safe return to camp, similar to Octodurus at 3.6.3-3.6.4.

<sup>228</sup> Gerlinger (2008) p. 108. See the Helvetii battle 1.26.3-1.26.4. While the circumstances are different, Caesar does not adequately explain the extraordinary lack of casualties against such a huge host in a defensible position.

describe the event in terms of punishment. Caesar enacts vengeance against an entire people rather than their combatants, and the total number is a demonstration of justice as applied in other situations, such as against the Aduatuci and Venetii, where whole populations are held to account.<sup>229</sup> Consequently the description of overall dead serves the dual purposes of addressing the initial threat, but is also an example of punishment as applied elsewhere in the *Bellum Gallicum*.<sup>230</sup> The inclusion of all Germanic casualties enunciates the thematic principle of justice being thoroughly implemented, rather than assisting in understanding the actual conduct of the battle.

This presentation of the battle as punitive may also explain why Caesar presents the slaughter of women and children in such stark and blunt terms. Scholars have reported that the description of the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri appears as a matter of fact, and the view of Collins is that such a presentation is simply a forthright explanation of activity.<sup>231</sup> As Collins states Caesar “displays unblushingly the very aggressiveness he has been charged with attempting to conceal”.<sup>232</sup> However it is entirely possible that Caesar wishes to show this aggression and slaughter as fundamentally a good thing, and the just dispensation of punishment on a deserving criminal people.<sup>233</sup> Caesar himself reveals this emotion when he states regarding the capture of the delegates, that his reaction was *gavisus*.<sup>234</sup> The record of his pleasure is indicative of his presentation of the whole affair, which rather than being matter-of-fact, is actually intended to be exultant. He is not just being blunt, but is actually encouraging a positive interpretation to reflect the elimination of a threat.

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<sup>229</sup> See 3.16.3-3.16.4 for the Venetii. The Aduatuci are punished after a betrayal at 2.33.7 and the total number captured is given. Note also the contrast in the conflict with the Helvetii and Belgae, where fighting strength is specifically given. See 1.2.4, 1.29.3.

<sup>230</sup> Note also that the method of withholding numeric figures until the end of the account suggests a revelatory purpose, rather than an explanatory purpose. See 4.15.3. The iteration of the numbers of the Usipetes and Tencteri at the very end is a confirmation of the scope of the threat posed by these peoples. By withholding this information to the very end Caesar provides the empirical evidence to support his activity throughout the account. He addresses the total number of the enemy rather than the casualties, since it is the whole people whom he is concerned to describe and whom he illustrates were the problem. This is similar to the Helvetii account at 1.29.

<sup>231</sup> See Lee (1969) p. 100 who cites the scholarship and notes the “apparent frankness” of the narrative as seen by others. See also Rice Holmes (1911) p. 140 who refers to the “tremendous frankness of this avowal”.

<sup>232</sup> Collins (1972) p. 929. Note Collins regards Caesar as not needing to show justification.

<sup>233</sup> Rambaud supports this interpretation of Caesar’s purpose. Refer to Rambaud (1966) p. 128.

<sup>234</sup> 4.13.6. See Collins (1972) p. 935 who notes the extraordinary use of the word.

The context in which the battle occurs, and the content Caesar has chosen, are driven by a need to address strategic, preventative and punitive issues. There is evidence to suggest he may have been required to defend his actions in this campaign, and the narrative certainly shows a desire to justify the treatment of the enemy. Caesar chooses aspects of combat that address the necessity of the slaughter over physical descriptions of activity or relevant tactical analyses, as his desire is to use the details of combat to support his handling of the tribes. Combat details are designed to illustrate that this massacre is inherently a good thing, where Caesar and his army are given a chance to strike at a particularly untrustworthy enemy, and at the same time eliminate a dangerous threat to Roman interests. The details of battle reinforce the explanation of events and justify Caesar's conduct regarding this particular campaign.

### **Campaign References in the Second British Invasion**

The importance of supporting Caesar's conduct of problematic campaigns is not only evident within particular episodes, but can extend across a series of campaign narratives. Brown calls Book Five a "virtual textbook on generalship" an idea that is supported by Caesar's representation of the campaigns and battles therein, and Brown's statement is certainly true to the extent that the narratives appear interconnected by the need to show Caesar's understanding and mitigation of the problems he describes.<sup>235</sup> This is apparent in the second invasion of Britain which utilises military details to address the problems of the previous invasion, and to demonstrate his reaction to those concerns.<sup>236</sup> The cross-referencing is evident not only in preparations for the expedition, but in details that contextualise or describe combat.<sup>237</sup> Caesar utilises details of the second invasion to address the first, illustrating at a simple level the interrelationship that exists between the various campaigns described.

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<sup>235</sup> Brown (2004) p. 295. Brown's idea is supported by Caesar's representation of the campaigns and battles therein. This is most evident in the cross referencing noted between the defence of Cicero's camp at 5.38-5.51, and the massacre of the legion under Sabinus and Cotta at 5.26-5.37. Carrington (1939) p. 105 draws the contrast between the Cicero and Sabinus situation 5.41 and 5.26-5.27. Gärtner (1975) pp. 113-118 also notes that these episodes are to be read in conjunction.

<sup>236</sup> 5.8-5.23.

<sup>237</sup> On numbers see separately pp. 123-126 above. Caesar also provides general information, such as the details of Britain at 5.12-14, including the use of woad in battle; however these details are not referenced or carried through into the battle narratives. On ethnography see also Schadee (2008) pp. 173-175.

A direct reference occurs when Caesar describes that he chose a landing place based on knowledge from the previous summer, illustrating that he communicates the relationship between his activity in the two campaigns.<sup>238</sup> In a marked contrast to the first expedition, he also makes clear that the distance to Britain from the point of origin is thirty miles, but does so to explain his choice of embarkation point, and while the actual distance travelled is eventually given, it is does so in order to show that the port was the most appropriate.<sup>239</sup> These details are a general response to the first invasion as they address the differences in how he conducted both crossings.

Caesar also demonstrates a concern with the problems he faced in the first invasion in his preparations for the second. He states that he ordered ships built that could easily be beached, a direct reference to the storms that ruined ships in the previous invasion, and possibly a reference to the difficulties of the first landings.<sup>240</sup> More importantly, he makes specific reference to cavalry in precise numbers, a marked contrast to the first invasion where no numbers of cavalry were given.<sup>241</sup> His precision is driven by the need to show that he overcame the problems of cavalry in the first invasion, as the absence of Roman cavalry was so critical in giving the enemy superiority on the battlefield.<sup>242</sup> Caesar displays a concern to state his foresight and planning, and to provide military data where it portrays his reactions to the setbacks of the previous campaign.

Caesar further addresses the previous episode as he implicitly answers circumstances expected following the first campaign. In describing the landings in the second invasion, he states that the enemy retire on sighting his fleet of eight hundred ships,

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<sup>238</sup> 5.8.4. There is not necessarily any misrepresentation, the text is simply utilising contextual information to illustrate his responses.

<sup>239</sup> 5.2.3. Refer pp. 251-253 above, and how such details demonstrate a commander's attention to detail.

<sup>240</sup> 5.1.1-5.1.4. Note he does not address the storms that plagued the first expedition, and in fact has ships designed that are lower and smaller than those used in the Mediterranean, showing the ship design was not in response to weather conditions but for ease of landing. 5.1.2. See 4.24.2-4.24.4 for the difficulties of the first landings. See also Rice Holmes (1911) p. 170.

<sup>241</sup> See 4.22.4 where Caesar only mentions that eighteen transports were assigned to the cavalry. No numbers of cavalry were actually given.

<sup>242</sup> See 4.26.5 for an example. See also pp. 283-291 above on the first invasion. See 5.5.3-5.5.4, 5.18.5. Also note how Caesar provides details of cavalry numbers left at the beach camp at 5.9.1. This may even explain why he mentions the cavalry contribution in battle, even where it is unclear exactly how they contributed to victory, such as a river crossing at 5.18 where the cavalry are specifically mentioned, even though the infantry appear more important.



and the number of ships appears to explain why the enemy do not oppose the landing this particular time.<sup>243</sup> He is even careful to specify how he came by this information, so as to verify the accuracy of his assessment regarding enemy motivation. Furthermore he elaborates details that draw attention to the sheer size of the fleet, and mentions that the total number of ships includes those brought over by private individuals, as he is not contextualising the actual strength of his forces but the appearance to the enemy.<sup>244</sup> Such details show that he considers it necessary to explain how he avoids the problems of the first landing and the resistance faced there.<sup>245</sup> His use of numbers in this instance is to explain why the enemy do not offer battle, and to demonstrate the different conduct of the two invasions.

### The Precedence of Gaul

Where the account of the British campaign is most evidently aimed at defending Caesar is in the manner that information forestalls criticism regarding the massacre of the legion commanded by Titurius Sabinus and Arunculeius Cotta, described later in the same book.<sup>246</sup> He uses the account of the second invasion to help exonerate him from responsibility for the defeat, by demonstrating a concern for affairs in Gaul, and to show that the invasion was not simple glory hunting. Battle in Britain is used to represent Caesar as a particularly cautious and conscientious general who prioritises safety and defence over reckless aggression. He even uses this account to demonstrate the separation of command responsibility and to make clear not only that subordinates are essential for success, but that both success and failure depend on the whole military organism. The narrative adheres to a greater pattern regarding Caesar's personal conduct and how he wishes his leadership to be understood in this book.

Caesar probably faced a particular problem when describing the second invasion, as at the time of writing a major revolt that led to the massacre had already occurred, and he had to account for something that he may not have been aware of at the time of the historical event, and which could ostensibly have indicated a neglect of affairs in

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<sup>243</sup> 5.8.6.

<sup>244</sup> 5.8.6.

<sup>245</sup> See 4.24-4.26 for the first landing and the enemy resistance.

<sup>246</sup> 5.26-5.37.

Gaul.<sup>247</sup> In the *Bellum Gallicum* Caesar avoids the intimation of negligence, by indicating that he expected further trouble in Gaul, had taken all necessary precautions and that the expedition to Britain was necessary and conducted with care.<sup>248</sup> Any idea that Caesar was negligent through ignorance is forestalled as he states openly that it was fear of an uprising in Gaul that led him to keep the Gallic chieftains with him, thereby establishing that he acted with due caution in response to the threat.<sup>249</sup> The details prior to the invasion therefore establish that the intervention in Britain occurs where he was aware of and prepared for potential trouble in Gaul, thereby mitigating any intimation that he was unprepared for such events.

Caesar's summation of the British campaign demonstrates that he placed affairs in Gaul over the invasion itself, as he makes clear he abandons Britain in favour of a return. He is very clear in this regard, describing that his return from Britain was in response to news of trouble in Gaul:

Caesar, cum constituisset hiemare in continenti propter repentinos Galliae motus, neque multum aestatis superesset atque id facile extrahi posse intellegeret, obsides imperat, et quid in annos singulos vectigalis populo Romano Britannia penderet constituit; interdicat atque imperat Cassivellauno ne Mandubracio neu Trinovantibus noceat.<sup>250</sup>

As is clear in this passage, Caesar weighed up the value in staying in Britain against returning to Gaul, with a clear implication through the use of *extrahi* that there were further matters to be resolved.<sup>251</sup> The fact that he could only order and compel the enemy leader Cassivellaunus on peace terms suggests that he was not happy with the inconclusive result.<sup>252</sup> Nevertheless, he states that he had decided to winter in Gaul

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<sup>247</sup> See Rambaud (1966) p. 102 on the issue of foresight.

<sup>248</sup> See 5.5.4, 5.8.1 for overt examples. Prior to the massacre itself, Caesar also demonstrates his preparations and diligence; through the manner he describes the delegation of command and the extensive details regarding the quarters. See 5.24 for the details.

<sup>249</sup> 5.5.4. See also Caesar's descriptions of his customary marching order in hostile territory, which acts to mitigate the surprise of the Nervii attack. See pp. 282-283 above.

<sup>250</sup> 5.22.4-5.22.5.

<sup>251</sup> Based on the small scale of the final battle and the lack of details provided, it seems likely that the enemy had not been fully defeated in the manner Caesar would have preferred. Also he had not yet clearly defeated Cassivellaunus himself according to the account. See 5.22.3-5.22.4.

<sup>252</sup> The use of words such as *interdicat atque imperat* is in marked contrast to the lack of ability to enforce demands.

due to the sudden activity there, demonstrating that in explaining the end result of the British campaign, affairs in Gaul took precedence and determined how he dealt with the defeated Cassivellaunus.<sup>253</sup> By indicating his dissatisfaction, he demonstrates that Gaul held precedence even where that led to the incomplete resolution of another venture.

This sense of urgency to return is also communicated in the account of the crossing back to Gaul. Caesar shows this clearly in his extended account of missing ships and the multiple trips back that were required when he states:

Quas cum aliquamdiu Caesar frustra expectasset, ne anni tempore a navigatione excluderetur, quod aequinoctium suberat, necessario angustius milites conlocavit ac summa tranquillitate consecuta secunda inita cum solvisset vigilia, prima luce terram attigit omnesque incolumes naves perduxit.<sup>254</sup>

As he makes clear, fear of being prevented from returning was strong in his mind at this point in the campaign, and he made the crossing by necessity under less than ideal circumstances. Caesar shows clearly the concern that he had for making a return and communicating how that compelled him to act as he did under the circumstances.

However Caesar is concerned to establish the primacy of Gallic affairs much earlier in the book, and structures much of the episode to support the idea that his concern for Gaul was ongoing with Britain marginalised.<sup>255</sup> The reasons for the second expedition are not clearly stated, it only being implied that it is because the Britons had not been pacified at the end of the first invasion. There is no overt self-aggrandisement that might suggest recklessness in his choice to invade a second time either.<sup>256</sup> Instead in his description of preparations for the invasion, on two occasions Caesar abruptly interrupts his account to describe his activity against disruptive elements in Gaul, these being included as they demonstrate his efforts in suppressing revolt and show where his attention was focused. When the Treveri appear to be causing trouble, he

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<sup>253</sup> 5.22.4-5.22.5.

<sup>254</sup> 5.23.5-5.23.6.

<sup>255</sup> This is an aspect of *consilium* as noted by Ramage (2003) p. 338.

<sup>256</sup> See 4.20.1-4.20.3. Note how the first invasion is presented here with the objective of reconnaissance. See 4.38.4-4.38.5 for the lack of hostages sent.

breaks off a description of the ship preparation to describe how he acted to deal with them.<sup>257</sup> The episode with Dumnorix is described in a similar manner, with Caesar abruptly breaking off his description of preparations to deal with internal troubles involving the recalcitrant leader.<sup>258</sup> While these are also descriptions of the sequence of events, they are included to show his concern with Gaul over any preparations or reasons for the invasion.

Caesar is careful to associate any measures taken in these episodes with the invasion plans, so that an order of precedence places Gaul first. This is evident in the manner that the affair with Dumnorix is introduced. As Caesar states, this Gallic leader was an ongoing problem, asking to be left behind and stirring up trouble among the Gauls.<sup>259</sup> It is quite clear that as far as Caesar was concerned the man could not be safely left behind. However, he states that the inclement weather that held him in port for twenty five days gave him the opportunity to deal with the situation, directly associating the delay and the measures taken against Dumnorix.<sup>260</sup> This is in spite of the probability that he would have had to deal with such a situation no matter what the weather conditions, to avoid leaving an openly hostile leader in Gaul.<sup>261</sup> Effectively Caesar uses the weather to explain how he had an opportunity to deal with Dumnorix, specifically reminding his audience that a pending invasion was on hold and that Gaul held precedence in his order of concerns.

Similarly, the response to news regarding the Treveri illustrates Gaul was the priority. When Caesar describes a muster of ships, he does not actually mention the numbers planned for the British campaign, instead stating that he took four legions and eight hundred cavalry against the Treveri:

Huic rei quod satis esse visum est militum reliquit. ipse cum legionibus expeditis quattuor et equitibus DCCC in fines Treverorum proficiscitur, quod hi neque ad

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<sup>257</sup> 5.2.4. See also Gelzer (1968) p. 132. Gelzer notes the very real need to care for Gaul prior to leaving for Britain.

<sup>258</sup> 5.6-5.7. Note in particular how he describes at 5.7.6 how he abruptly cut short preparations to deal with Dumnorix.

<sup>259</sup> 5.6.1-5.6.3.

<sup>260</sup> 5.7.1-5.7.8.

<sup>261</sup> 5.7.3.

concilia veniebant neque imperio parebant Germanosque Transrhenanos sollicitare dicebantur.<sup>262</sup>

He merely states that he left enough men with the ships as seemed enough to continue the preparations, as the numeric feature is regarding his measures regarding Gaul. These receive precise details to draw attention to them, and illustrate where Caesar's attention was focused.

Furthermore the level of detail given also shows a concern to communicate interest with the minutiae of affairs in Gaul. Caesar gives an extended description of his activity among the Treveri, recording how each rival leader acted, felt and spoke; the attention indicating his concern with the details of the affair.<sup>263</sup> Similarly the Dumnorix episode is described using indirect speech as well, so that it has precedence over the musters for Britain.<sup>264</sup> In particular the use of speech shows a concern with reporting the words said in that episode, a marked contrast to the invasion itself where almost no spoken records are given.<sup>265</sup> The attention given to the activity against these individuals indicates that Caesar structures the preparation period to indicate his concern with, and prioritisation of Gaul over the invasion itself.

The force of these passages involving the Gallic leaders ensures that attention remains on Gaul even while Caesar describes his preparations for the invasion. This is apparent in comments regarding Indutiomarus and Dumnorix:

Id factum graviter tulit Indutiomarus, suam gratiam inter suos minui, et qui iam ante inimico in nos animo fuisset, multo gravius hoc dolore exarsit.

Ille autem revocatus resistere ac se manu defendere suorumque fidem implorare coepit, saepe clamitans liberum se liberaeque esse civitatis.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> 5.2.4.

<sup>263</sup> 5.3-5.4.

<sup>264</sup> The muster of cavalry is described at 5.5, along with the loss of some ships.

<sup>265</sup> Note also that the words may not be a true record, but show that Caesar is concentrating on giving the episode a distinctive and memorable character. The one instance of indirect speech in the British invasion is at 5.20.1-5.20.3.

<sup>266</sup> 5.4.4, 5.7.8-5.7.9.

The description of Indutiomarus is full of foreboding and foreshadowed trouble, as the use of *exarsit* suggests.<sup>267</sup> While the words of Dumnorix in the second passage might appear sympathetic through his appeals to *libertas*, they make the passage memorable, keeping attention on affairs in Gaul over the preparations.<sup>268</sup> The evocative language used suggests Caesar's attention was on Gaul as the passages are memorable and noteworthy in comparison to the preparations themselves.

The manner in which Caesar accounts for delegations prior to the invasion is also utilised to show his concern for Gaul. As he states immediately after the affair with Dumnorix:

His rebus gestis, Labieno in continenti cum tribus legionibus et equitum milibus duobus relicto, ut portus tueretur et rei frumentariae provideret, quaeque in Gallia gererentur cognosceret, consiliumque pro tempore et pro re caperet, ipse cum quinque legionibus et pari numero equitum, quem in continenti relinquebat, ad solis occasum naves solvit et leni Africo proventus...<sup>269</sup>

The chapter starts with the delegation of Labienus, three legions and 2,000 cavalry in Gaul, so that the description of the invasion actually comes after such precautions.<sup>270</sup> Caesar is also careful to state the level of discretion that Labienus held, so that his care to the delegations is clearly enunciated.<sup>271</sup> Importantly, he states he took the same number of cavalry with him as was left behind, so that a numeric aspect of the episode reflects his equal concern with both regions. The delegation is included specifically to demonstrate a concern for affairs in Gaul and to forestall any criticism that the defeat of Sabinus and Cotta occurred due to neglect.

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<sup>267</sup> The intensity of the language regarding these incidents is in marked contrast to the invasion preparations, which lack the passion that appeals to *libertas* or the implication of force that *exarsit* evokes.

<sup>268</sup> On Dumnorix see Barlow (1998) p. 143. On *libertas* see Seager (2003) p. 23.

<sup>269</sup> 5.8.1-5.8.2.

<sup>270</sup> Contrast 4.22.5-4.22.6 in the first invasion, where the delegations come after the preparations.

<sup>271</sup> 5.8.1-5.8.2.

## Command Qualities in the Second Invasion

The invasion itself show aspects of diligence that are common to other parts of the work; however the amount of anecdotal information suggests a particular interest in mitigating any culpability for the later disaster, through the presentation of Caesar's qualities as commander. In this regard he illustrates an attention to detail, and concern for minutiae in general. This is apparent in other battles where the minutiae serve to present his understanding of warfare, most notably in the siege of Alesia discussed in Chapter Four.<sup>272</sup> In the case of the second invasion of Britain, the details appear to support Caesar's self-representation by establishing that he was not a neglectful commander.<sup>273</sup> He describes the design of ships he ordered built, giving the shape of the ships and why this shape was important.<sup>274</sup> These provide context for understanding how he wanted the campaign conducted, such as shallow drafts for beaching and loading, and broadness for carrying cargo and animals.<sup>275</sup> This information, even going so far as to include where tackle was ordered from, show his attention to detail and the extent of his preparations.<sup>276</sup> Even the numbers of ships is given to illustrate preparedness, as Caesar not only states the numbers constructed but the exact number of warships, even though they played no role in the fighting itself.<sup>277</sup> The description of preparations is therefore part of establishing his attention to minutiae, and while they have significance for the expedition itself, they also have importance for Caesar's self-presentation as a diligent and attentive commander, who does not let even minor details escape his scrutiny.

The concern to illustrate caution and preparation is evident in the attention paid to details that highlight these qualities. This is evident in the description of the first Roman activity on landing:

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<sup>272</sup> See above p. 266.

<sup>273</sup> For other examples of minutiae see the Venetii ships at 3.13.1-3.13.7 and the walls of Avaricum at 7.23. The most notable, the bridge over the Rhine described at 4.17-18, is not discussed as does not specifically address a battle narrative.

<sup>274</sup> See overall 5.1.1.

<sup>275</sup> 5.1.2-5.1.3.

<sup>276</sup> See 5.1.5 for the equipment from Spain.

<sup>277</sup> 5.2.2-5.2.3. Caesar also mentions when actuality does not meet this idea of preparedness, as he notes when the ships do not make rendezvous at 5.5.2.

Caesar exposito exercitu et loco castris idoneo capto, ubi ex captivis cognovit quo in loco hostium copiae consedissent, cohortibus decem ad mare relictis et equitibus trecentis, qui praesidio navibus essent, de tertia vigilia ad hostes contendit, eo minus veritus navibus, quod in litore molli atque aperto deligatas ad ancoras relinquebat. ei praesidio navibusque Q. Atrium praefecit.<sup>278</sup>

Caesar provides extensive details to establish his concern for the safety of the camp and ships. He describes the numbers of troops held at the camp, and even names the commander in charge. Most importantly, his own prudence is apparent when he states that he advanced against the enemy having less fear due to these precautions. This instance is not unique, and when he leaves camp later he describes his leaving in a similar manner, even going so far as to restate the forces left behind as the same as the first time.<sup>279</sup> The statements and the details provided demonstrate clearly that a feature of this campaign is on establishing his overall caution.

In his account of combat Caesar also focuses on activities that demonstrate his prudence and concern with defence. His role in one battle is limited to the following statement: *sed eos fugientes longius Caesar prosequi vetuit, et quod loci naturam ignorabat, et quod magna parte diei consumpta munitioni castrorum tempus relinqui volebat.*<sup>280</sup> In this statement Caesar describes his reasons for forbidding the men from pursuit, such as the time of day and the ignorance of the countryside. He is also particularly careful to mention that a major concern is to prepare defensive fortifications, again illustrating his conservative and cautious nature. In this regard, Caesar does not need to explain his failure to pursue in such detail, as he engages in a pursuit on the next day and thus does not need to explain an apparent omission.<sup>281</sup> He is therefore utilising the circumstances of the British campaign to forestall future criticism, by a self-representation that shows a command of affairs motivated primarily by caution.

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<sup>278</sup> 5.9.1-5.9.2.

<sup>279</sup> 5.11.7.

<sup>280</sup> 5.9.8.

<sup>281</sup> See 4.26.5 in the first invasion for a contrast, where the cavalry are not available. Note also that the failure to pursue on the next day is explained due to the prioritisation of the setbacks regarding the ships. See 5.10.1-5.10.2 and 5.11.1 for the pursuit and recall.



A description of storm damage also demonstrates that the design is to address his prudent reaction to setbacks, in particular those that occurred in his absence. Caution is placed first when some ships are destroyed, and Caesar describes how he abandons pursuit of the enemy to return to the fleet as follows: *eadem fere quae ex nuntiis litterisque cognoverat, coram perspicit, sic ut amissis circiter XL navibus reliquae tamen refici posse magno negotio viderentur*.<sup>282</sup> He describes his confirmation and qualification of what the messengers state, and also his own assessment of affairs at the time.<sup>283</sup> He develops the concept of his attention to minutiae by focussing on his own assessment and role in the repairs. The level of detail regarding the repairs, and his own prominent role in this activity demonstrates the importance he places on his attention to the mitigation of setbacks, even describing that it was he personally who assessed the damage and decided that the ships could be repaired.<sup>284</sup> He even describes how he picked out artificers and sent for equipment from the continent.<sup>285</sup> The incidental information supplied illustrates his care and attention in such circumstances, in particular his mitigation of setbacks, critical to an explanation of his overall command. The impression encouraged appears to be that of a diligent and careful commander who takes more than reasonable precautions to prevent or mitigate the effects of unforeseen disasters, a qualification that prepares the audience to understand his lack of culpability for the later defeat of his subordinates in Gaul.

### Subordinate Responsibilities

While Caesar's self-representation establishes his caution, his presentation of the army concentrates on establishing their importance for successful operations, broadening the level of responsibility with which to view the later events of the book.<sup>286</sup> He utilises the second invasion to illustrate the importance of all elements in the army to victory, and uses the description of combat to establish this principle.

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<sup>282</sup> 5.11.2. See also 5.10.1-5.10.2 and 5.11.1.

<sup>283</sup> Rice Holmes (1911) pp. 179-180 notes that Caesar may also be trying to excuse himself for not having the ships hauled ashore. However the main thrust of that argument is related to his comment about how the ships were left at 5.9.6, rather than in the details of repairs. See Carrington (1939) p. 83.

<sup>284</sup> See 5.11.2.

<sup>285</sup> 5.11.3-5.11.4.

<sup>286</sup> See Riggsby (2006) p. 204 and Rosenstein (1990) pp. 172-173 on blame. Note that Caesar is not necessarily preparing the text to blame the soldiery; however he is preparing the text for the separation of responsibility and the limitations of his own culpability.

There is an attention to detail regarding delegated commands that is in marked contrast to the first invasion, where subordinates played almost no role in the account.<sup>287</sup> Caesar names all the roles played by his subordinates, specifically naming the command of Labienus in Gaul, and the delegation of Quintus Atrius as camp commander.<sup>288</sup> When he receives news from camp, he repeats the name of Quintus, demonstrating the role and placement of subordinates; in this case how important this subordinate was.<sup>289</sup> This style persists throughout the episode, Caesar mentioning a commander in charge of foraging, and even stating when a tribune was killed in battle.<sup>290</sup> All such details draw attention to the role of his subordinates that help exonerate the commander from any later failures by stressing the importance of their contribution to success.

Caesar also adopts a highly critical approach to this examination of subordinates, to clearly define their shared responsibility for success or failure and to prepare the audience for the later criticism of the failed commander Sabinus.<sup>291</sup> He states at one point that the cavalry pursue the enemy too vigorously, his use of *cupidius* to describe their behaviour an implicit condemnation of overzealous behaviour and a reflection of his own more cautious attitude.<sup>292</sup> He similarly mentions that a successful surprise attack against entrenching Roman troops occurs due to them being *imprudentibus*, again establishing their need for independent watchfulness and preparation.<sup>293</sup> The critical assessment of such activity shows that he utilises the details of combat to highlight the importance of all elements of the army for success.

Praise is utilised to similarly remind the audience of the importance of all elements of the army for success. The crossing of the channel to Britain is notable in this regard, as it focuses on achievements by the men. Caesar describes that in the crossing the

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<sup>287</sup> See 4.22.5-4.22.6. Nousek (2006) p. 181 notes the general absence of subordinate names in the first invasion.

<sup>288</sup> See 5.8.1 for Labienus, 5.9.2 for Quintus Atrius.

<sup>289</sup> 5.10.2-5.10.3. Note the precision regarding the moment at which this occurred.

<sup>290</sup> 5.17.2, 5.15.5. The mention of the tribune Quintus Laberius Durus could also establish a personal cost to the unwatchfulness of the troops and a reminder of the need for diligence. Note this is the only tribune casualty mentioned by name in the *Bellum Gallicum*.

<sup>291</sup> In the massacre, Sabinus, and to a lesser extent Cotta and the men are criticised heavily. See pp. 209-213 above, and pp. 335-339 below.

<sup>292</sup> 5.15.2-5.15.3. See Gergovia discussed at p. 280 above.

<sup>293</sup> 5.15.3. By contrast, Caesar's own intervention, which describes how he sent two of the first cohorts against the attack, serves as a reminder of his own prudence in comparison to this lapse 5.15.4-5.15.5.

fleet missed its objective and was forced to row to the landing place.<sup>294</sup> He then gives a description of the contribution of the men as follows:

Qua in re admodum fuit militum virtus laudanda, qui vectoriis gravibusque navigiis non intermisso remigandi labore longarum navium cursum adaequarunt. accessum est ad Britanniam omnibus navibus meridiano fere tempore...<sup>295</sup>

Outright praise for the contribution of the men is given, demonstrating that Caesar places importance on this campaign on recognising positive achievements, in this case actions that ensure the fleet arrives intact at the landing place.<sup>296</sup> He does not use an isolated case, stating of the construction of ships:

Eo cum venisset, circumitis omnibus hibernis singulari militum studio in summa rerum omnium inopia circiter sescentas eius generis, cuius supra demonstravimus, naves et longas duodetriginta invenit instructas neque multum abesse ab eo, quin paucis diebus deduci possint. conlaudatis militibus atque iis qui negotio praefuerant...<sup>297</sup>

It is clear in this passage that his expectations were exceeded and he praises not just the soldiers, but all involved in organising the work.<sup>298</sup> In doing so he highlights the contribution of his subordinates, including the sub commanders, so that all their activity is scrutinised and recognised accordingly. This attention serves to establish context for the later massacre, by illustrating that the behaviour of the army as a whole is essential for an effective campaign.

Caesar takes particular care to praise the men in combat, demonstrating that battle is structured to draw attention to the role of subordinates. As is the case elsewhere in the work, the activity of the men supports the general proposition of the text, and in this

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<sup>294</sup> 5.8.2-5.8.3.

<sup>295</sup> 5.8.4-5.8.6.

<sup>296</sup> Also note that the rowing may refer back to his own foresight, as Caesar had ordered the transports be built for rowing at 5.1.

<sup>297</sup> 5.2.2-5.2.3.

<sup>298</sup> Note also that the numbers are communicated as part of highlighting the exemplary nature of the work.

account Caesar uses their actions to establish the importance of all for success.<sup>299</sup> He explains victory in one battle according to the activity of the men, such as the use of a *testudo* to overcome fortifications, which they make themselves without any orders from the commander.<sup>300</sup> He is very careful in this instance to credit the legion with success, stating that it is the *milites* of the Seventh Legion, his naming of the legion important, as it has not been specified thus far in the account and thus only included for accreditation.<sup>301</sup> In another example, the description of fighting on the march gives credit to the cavalry, a rare example of Caesar focussing on their contribution but evidence of how important assigning credit is in this episode.<sup>302</sup> While the cavalry played a major role in the campaign, the statement *nostri omnibus partibus superiores fuerint* appears to be a general observation regarding the superiority of his troops rather than the physical capabilities.<sup>303</sup> The objective is also evident in the description of a river crossing where he states:

Sed ea celeritate atque eo impetu milites ierunt, cum capite solo ex aqua extarent, ut hostes impetum legionum atque equitum sustinere non possent ripasque dimitterent ac se fugae mandarent.<sup>304</sup>

This passage focuses on the speed and force of the attack as the reasons for success. In doing so Caesar omits direct mention of how stakes the enemy had fortified the river with were overcome, as he focuses on the contribution of the troops.<sup>305</sup> While

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<sup>299</sup> When Caesar describes the soldiers in action, it is often in support of the overall objective of the passage, such as the revenge motif of the Usipetes and Tencteri encounter discussed at pp. 315-316 above, the defeat of the Germani reputation in battle discussed at pp. 155-158, or the massacre at Avaricum, examined at pp. 293-294. There appears to be a pattern where there is an objective in highlighting their contribution. See also the Venetii account and how the men are credited with the *falx* idea during the battle, discussed at pp. 139-144 above.

<sup>300</sup> 5.9.7-5.9.8.

<sup>301</sup> 5.9.7.

<sup>302</sup> 5.15.1.

<sup>303</sup> 5.15.1. The cavalry are mentioned several times in the second invasion, due primarily to their importance for defeating the enemy when used in close conjunction with infantry. However they do seem to be singled out for praise on some of these occasions. See 5.9.4 where the cavalry drive the enemy off at a river crossing, without details of how they achieve this, suggesting that the only important aspect to note is that it was the cavalry who achieved this. See also 5.17.3 where Caesar makes clear the cavalry achieve the victory supported by infantry, and he specifically mentions their contribution at 5.18.3 in the swift attack across the river. Contrast the treatment of cavalry elsewhere, such as at 1.25.5. In the case of this episode, the cavalry were important for success, and he appears to take particular care to mention this. This could also be a reaction to the first invasion failures and to show how he learns and adapts. See above pp. 283-291.

<sup>304</sup> 5.18.5.

<sup>305</sup> 5.18.3.

physical factors on the battlefield can be implied, the stated reasons for success are aspects of quality regarding the troops, which shows that Caesar places emphasis on the men and their contribution.

It is not just the progress of battle where Caesar assigns responsibility to the group, but he also describes enemy fighting techniques to broaden responsibility. As he states of enemy chariots:

Toto hoc in genere pugnae cum sub oculis omnium ac pro castris dimicaretur, intellectum est nostros propter gravitatem armorum, quod neque insequi cedentes possent neque ab signis discedere auderent, minus aptos esse ad huius generis hostem, equites autem magno cum periculo proelio dimicare, propterea quod illi etiam consulto plerumque cederent et, cum paulum ab legionibus nostros removissent, ex essedis desilirent et pedibus dispari proelio contenderent. equestris autem proelii ratio et cedentibus et insequentibus par atque idem periculum inferebat. accedebat huc ut numquam conferti, sed rari magnisque intervallis proeliarentur stationesque dispositas haberent atque alios alii deinceps exciperent integrique et recentes defatigatis succederent.<sup>306</sup>

From the outset of this analytical passage describing chariot warfare Caesar makes it clear that the problem is a Roman one and not just that of the commander, as the use of *intellectum est* and *sub oculis omnium* suggests.<sup>307</sup> It is all the forces who witness the enemy superiority and evasiveness, thereby indicating that the problem is not just the commander's but the army's as a whole.<sup>308</sup> Caesar uses the instrument of analysis to demonstrate that campaign problems are a group responsibility, that they are analysed and reacted to by the entire army rather than just the commander.

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<sup>306</sup> 5.16.1-5.16.4.

<sup>307</sup> Contrast the lack of spectacle references in the chariot warfare described in the first invasion, suggesting that this passage is utilised differently. On spectacle see Feldherr (1998) pp. 4, 10, Kraus (2007) p. 375, Quintilian 8.3.66-8.3.70. See also pp. 286-288 for the use of chariot combat in the first invasion.

<sup>308</sup> Contrast the self-promotional objective in the Sabis River account, where Caesar is central to identifying and resolving the problem of the faltering legions. See pp. 236-237 above.

More importantly, Caesar is entirely silent on his own role in the resolution of this conundrum, allowing the men's actions to resolve battle rather than assign responsibility for a solution to any particular person. As he states:

Postero die procul a castris hostes in collibus constiterunt rarique se ostendere et lenius quam pridie nostros equites proelio lacessere coeperunt. sed meridie cum Caesar pabulandi causa tres legiones atque omnem equitatum cum C. Trebonio legato misisset, repente ex omnibus partibus ad pabulatores advolaverunt, sic uti ab signis legionibusque non absisterent. nostri acriter in eos impetu facto reppulerunt neque finem sequendi fecerunt, quoad subsidio confisi equites, cum post se legiones viderent, praecipites hostes egerunt magnoque eorum numero interfecto neque sui colligendi neque consistendi aut ex essedis desiliendi facultatem dederunt. ex hac fuga protinus, quae undique convenerant, auxilia discesserunt, neque post id tempus umquam summis nobiscum copiis hostes contenderunt.<sup>309</sup>

The solution to the superiority of the enemy is evident through the action of the men, who act in close concert with each other so that infantry and cavalry are not isolated. No officer orders this, neither Caesar nor even Gaius Trebonius who is in charge of the forces at the time.<sup>310</sup> The countermeasure to enemy tactics is credited to the army in general, in spite of the almost certainty that someone must have ordered the various elements to act in concert.<sup>311</sup> Just as they witness the problems, so the actions of the army solve them, thereby preparing for the responsibility attributed to subordinates in the later massacre, by indicating the broad role the army plays in correctly addressing the problems of campaign.

There is a consistent approach to this campaign narrative that suggests Caesar's preparation for the events that are described later in Book Five, in particular the massacre of a legion under Sabinus and Cotta. Most important to the presentation is his own self-representation, including his caution and concern for and prioritisation of

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<sup>309</sup> 5.17.1-5.17.5.

<sup>310</sup> Caesar only orders the foraging, a move that shows his diligence regarding logistics.

<sup>311</sup> Importantly, the cavalry must have shown considerable restraint not to over pursue yet no commander is mentioned. Caesar in particular has mentioned that he had to order the men not to pursue in the first encounter at 5.9.8. In this encounter, some preparation to match the enemy tactics must have been made, but Caesar assigns no individual or even a group for credit. The army as an entire entity is then responsible.

matters in Gaul, so that any intimation of negligence or impetuosity is mitigated by his attention to affairs. He also pays particular attention to the role of subordinates, adopting a critical approach to their contribution that establishes the importance of the whole army for success. By broadening the level of responsibility in battle narratives, and through his own representation, Caesar ensures that the invasion of Britain supports his conduct of the war, by preparing for the disaster itself and the role of commander and subordinates therein.

### **Contrasts of Behaviour in Book Five**

Just as the second British invasion prepares the narrative for the massacre, so the description of a siege of Quintus Cicero's camp described after the defeat is used to isolate the behaviour of the defeated commanders, by showing that the actions of the commanders occurred against Caesar's express wishes and his expectations of subordinates.<sup>312</sup> The massacre of Sabinus and Cotta was addressed in Chapter Three to show the censure of Sabinus' actions; however the interrelationship of that battle narrative and the campaigns of Book Five extend beyond the massacre itself. While Melchior regards the second narrative as an expiation of the defeat, it also serves a more complex role in defending Caesar.<sup>313</sup> The later battle proves that Caesar's assessment of the massacre is correct, with details of negotiations, and anecdotal instances of combat provided as a clear contrast between good and bad behaviour.<sup>314</sup> Such cross referencing has been noted and examined by scholars such as Brown.<sup>315</sup> However the influence on combat establishes the strength of the connection between these battle narratives where defending Caesar's conduct is the objective. The relationship supports Caesar's assessment of the defeat, and defends him from criticism by showing the behaviour on display was not condoned.

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<sup>312</sup> See pp. 209-213 above. See Brown (2004) for an overview of the relationship.

<sup>313</sup> See Melchior (2004) p. 55 on the issue of avenging the massacre and its effect on presentation. While the defeat is certainly expiated, Caesar's objective is more complex as it contrasts the behaviour of the participants as well.

<sup>314</sup> This is not the only purpose of the battle, which is also structured to demonstrate the timeliness of Caesar's arrival. That aspect of the account is examined at pp. 239-243 above. Note that the battle shows that Caesar is right in his assessment, as the defenders successfully hold out until he arrives.

<sup>315</sup> Brown (2004) p. 292; Rambaud (1966) p. 231; Rasmussen (1963) pp. 27-29; Eden (1962) p. 111; Gärtner (1975) pp. 116-117.

The clearest reference to Sabinus and Cotta is in the summation of the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp, as Caesar openly makes reference to the previous massacre to draw contrasts that indicate that the defeated commanders acted contrary to his will.<sup>316</sup> As he states:

...de casu Sabini et Cottae certius ex captivis cognoscit. postero die contione habita rem gestam proponit, milites consolatur et confirmat: quod detrimentum culpa et temeritate legati sit acceptum, hoc aequiore animo ferendum docet, quod beneficio deorum immortalium et virtute eorum expiato incommodo neque hostibus diutina laetitia neque ipsis longior dolor relinquatur.<sup>317</sup>

In relating this detail Caesar demonstrates that he wishes the battle to be seen as expiation for the previous event through correct behaviour.<sup>318</sup> The specific reference to *culpa et temeritate*, contrasted with the *virtute* of the current defenders, is a clear indicator of the interrelationship of the two accounts in the work, and that the pairing favours the latter behaviour.<sup>319</sup> The contrast serves to isolate the actions of the defeated commanders from Caesar by separating their conduct from sanctioned behaviour, and Caesar's overall grasp of military matters.

Furthermore Caesar provides incidental details to support his assessment of the massacre, and to exonerate him from the behaviour of the defeated commanders. Details such as the reply of Quintus Cicero to the Nervii invite contrasts in character, as Quintus acts in precisely the opposite way to Sabinus and Cotta, outright refusing to deal with an enemy under arms, the difference an implicit condemnation of the earlier behaviour.<sup>320</sup> Cicero even states Caesar's stance bluntly when he replies to their offers: *ad haec unum modo respondit: non esse consuetudinem populi Romani*

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<sup>316</sup> Carrington (1939) p.105; Gärtner (1975) pp. 113-118.

<sup>317</sup> 5.52.4-5.52.6.

<sup>318</sup> He even uses a form of *expio* with its connotations of purification. See Brown (2004) pp. 294, 307. Browns interpretation of centurions' contest is that it is to show the expiation of the Sabinus episode.

<sup>319</sup> 5.52.6.

<sup>320</sup> 5.41.7-5.41.8 and 5.28.1 Even the speech of the enemy is a parallel of that made by Ambiorix as they state the things Ambiorix has stated at 5.41.1-5.41.2. Note how Caesar is not filling in actual details and the enemy only mentions Sabinus, not Cotta. The objective is to analyse Cicero's actions in contrast to Sabinus in the face of enemy negotiations. The long speech given by the enemy given is in dramatic contrast to Cicero's reply, which is blunt and encapsulates the correct Roman behaviour. Such details defend Caesar's conduct of the war as they isolate Sabinus from correct Roman behaviour and the commander's overall understanding of such matters.



*ullam accipere ab hoste armato condicionem.*<sup>321</sup> Caesar uses the word *consuetudino populi Romani* to make clear how far the defeated commanders acted against Roman custom.<sup>322</sup> The interpretation of the battle as a contrast in behaviours is clearly invited, and serves to support the overall contention that the massacre occurred due to behaviour that was unsanctioned, thereby removing him from culpability for the disaster.

The role of the soldiers also isolates the behaviour of the defeated men from correct conduct in battle. In the massacre, Caesar specifically mentions the soldiers' concern for their personal possessions, stating that they worried over them, and even left ranks over their concern for such matters.<sup>323</sup> He describes the actions of the defeated troops as follows during the passage on the massacre:

Praeterea accidit – quod fieri necesse erat – ut vulgo milites ab signis discederent, quaeque quisque eorum carissima haberet, ab impedimentis petere atque arripere properaret, clamore et fletu omnia complerentur.<sup>324</sup>

Consumitur vigiliis reliqua pars noctis, cum sua quisque miles circumspiceret, quid secum portare posset, quid ex instrumento hibernorum relinquere cogeretur.<sup>325</sup>

The above statements appear in direct contrast to the below passage, which describes the behaviour of Quintus Cicero's men in the later battle:

At tanta militum virtus atque ea praesentia animi fuit, ut, cum undique flamma torrerentur maximaque telorum multitudine premerentur suaque omnia impedimenta atque omnes fortunas conflagrare intellegerent, non modo demigrandi causa de vallo decederet nemo, sed paene ne respiceret quidem quisquam ac tum omnes acerrime fortissimeque pugnarent.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> 5.41.7-5.41.8. No details of the actual meeting are given as the circumstances are not important to the message.

<sup>322</sup> Rosenstein (1990) p. 134 notes the correct Roman response of Cicero.

<sup>323</sup> See 5.31.4-5.31.5 and 5.33.6.

<sup>324</sup> 5.33.6.

<sup>325</sup> 5.31.4-5.31.5.

<sup>326</sup> 5.43.4-5.43.5 See Brown (2004) pp. 299, 302.

The difference in conduct by the men in each battle provides support for the idea that the earlier massacre occurred due to failures that arose in part from the men involved, who acted contrary to praiseworthy behaviour. The attitudes of the men regarding the baggage is included to draw specific contrasts that isolate the behaviour of the defeated from his general expectations regarding the soldiers.

More importantly, one of the most detailed combat anecdotes of the work is described in the Quintus Cicero siege, and contains elements that clearly contrast the behaviour of the two sets of defenders. The description of Lucius Vorenus and Titus Pullo in battle demonstrates that co-operation and *virtus* are important elements in ensuring the survival of soldiers under attack, as the two mutually support each other in order to return to the camp. They are described as *inimicus*, yet manage to extricate themselves from a difficult situation by acting together.<sup>327</sup> This is in marked contrast to Sabinus, who argued violently with Cotta, and abandoned his compatriot in order to surrender.<sup>328</sup> As Brown notes, the contrast in behaviour is significant, and as the anecdote draws close attention to the issue of co-operation Caesar's concern seems to describe battle with reference to issues of character and behaviour.<sup>329</sup> The vignette is therefore an overt example of *exempla* being utilised to illustrate correct behaviour and thereby implicitly condemn the defeated commanders.

The siege of Quintus Cicero is also used to show that Cicero, unlike the defeated commanders, was correct to await his leader. Caesar gives several descriptions of his own response to the siege, the attention to detail focusing on his own understanding of the need for urgency, and to show that his subordinate's faith was well placed.<sup>330</sup> He is very precise regarding the orders he gave, and the co-ordination of forces in order

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<sup>327</sup> 5.44.9-5.44.10 *succurrit inimicus illi Vorenus et laboranti subvenit*. See also Brown (2004) p. 302 who also notes the behaviour of other soldiers at 5.43.6-5.43.7. At p. 301 Brown also lists the parallels.

<sup>328</sup> 5.31.1-5.31.2. See Lendon (2005) pp. 217-218. The event may be true, but there is a literary tradition involved as well.

<sup>329</sup> See Brown (2004) p. 301. Kraus (2005) pp. 246-247 analyses 5.44. Eden (1962) p. 111 states Caesar's account of Vorenus and Pullo is an example of *exornatio* as he was not present and relied on Quintus' report. As Eden notes, sentences are short, and the subject "now one, now the other of the rival centurions". This effect highlights the rivalry in contrast to the actual bearing of aid to one another.

<sup>330</sup> See 5.46-5.48 for the details.

to reach the beleaguered camp.<sup>331</sup> He is particular to mention times and distances, and even incidental details such as the re-use of a messenger.<sup>332</sup> He even describes his own contribution to a message and the details of how it was attached to a javelin, such is his concern for detail and the idea of faith well-placed.<sup>333</sup> All these aspects of Caesar's response are designed to capture the importance to him of rescuing the camp, to prove that Cicero was correct to hold and await the arrival of his commander. The details illustrate how comprehensively the narration of the siege is directed at the earlier passage, in order to exonerate Caesar from the disaster described.

The battle narratives examined in this chapter illustrate that the need to explain Caesar's conduct or the results of a campaign affect the military information conveyed. While there is a general care to communicate his diligence as commander, Caesar's conduct of affairs is particularly addressed in campaigns that are problematic in terms of their result. The first invasion of Britain is a notable example, as its representation of combat explains why he was forced to retire without a conclusive victory. The siege and assault on Avaricum is also used to contextualise the result and to primarily explain the massacre as brought about by the enemy and the Roman soldiers. Caesar is also clear to address his own decisions, and uses the details of battle to justify his conduct in the account of the Usipetes and Tencteri, where the Germanic threat and the representation of battle as a punitive response explain why he acted pre-emptively to eradicate these peoples and take further action across the Rhine. Self-defence can also span several campaigns, and the second invasion of Britain, the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta, and the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp all have an implicit relationship, as they work in conjunction to exonerate him personally from the massacre. The battles are particularly illustrative of this need to explain and defend, and as with other persuasive objectives, shape the course of battle and its context in the *Bellum Gallicum*.

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<sup>331</sup> 5.46-5.48. Details include the sending of envoys to camp commanders, and he even describes himself as *diectus* at the news Labienus is held up.

<sup>332</sup> 5.46.1, 5.47.1, 5.48.3-5.48.9.

<sup>333</sup> As illustrated at pp. 242-243 above such details also serve to emphasise his arrival, even though they are marginally important considering the very next statement is regarding his actual arrival.

## CONCLUSION

### Battle Narrative not Battle Report

This thesis has demonstrated the place of battle narrative in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and the fundamentally persuasive role of the military details. Several theories of reporting battle have been advanced by military historians such as Lendon and Kagan, and these rely on the implicit idea that a major role of the narrative is to explain the result of the historical battle.<sup>1</sup> However Caesar's accounts do not always align with a full and accurate reconstruction of battle itself, and an important aspect of this study has been to show that while the battle narratives contain a wealth of information about the encounters fought, this does not simply occur due to a reconstructive motive, as the criteria for battle narrative are more involved than clarification of the historical event or a record of victory. As was illustrated in Chapter One Caesar can actually display an almost cavalier attitude to the reconstruction of the historical confrontation, being highly selective in his choice of information to include.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, there is also a lack of reporting standards to judge his objectives as a purely military reporter, with the absence of immediate precedents or a stated goal regarding battle.<sup>3</sup> In the *Bellum Gallicum* some battles are extremely short even where the scope of the original event must have been immense, as is evident in the very first battle described, the defence of the Rhone, illustrating the extent of simplification that can occur.<sup>4</sup> A detailed examination of the battles and their context also shows just how inconsistent Caesar is regarding military reporting, particularly the details that provide context for battle, such as the strength and nature of the forces, their dispositions, or movement on the battlefield.<sup>5</sup> Elements appear and then disappear on the battlefield without explanation, even where they must have played an important role in the historical confrontation. As Chapter One illustrated, Caesar is not just interested in explanation of the historical event.

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis qualifies the arguments of Lendon (1999) p. 277 and Kagan (2006) pp 108, 201-201. Kagan argues against Lendon, but still states that Caesar's accounts are primarily determined by the motive of reconstructing the original event and the important features of the confrontation.

<sup>2</sup> See Wiseman (1979) p. 30-31 for use of the term "cavalier" in regards to rhetoricians.

<sup>3</sup> See Riggsby (2006) pp. 133, 202.

<sup>4</sup> 1.8.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 45-59 above.

Caesar's apparent disinterest in a comprehensive reconstruction of historical confrontations is a deliberate choice driven by his relationship with his audience, in particular his desire to influence their reception of the events described. Whether in issues of command, or details such as the placement, presence and activity of forces on the battlefield, or even the minutiae of combat such as anecdotal information, elements of battle often appear in order to evoke a desired reaction.<sup>6</sup> This is apparent in the stylistic purpose for which information can appear, such as in the Bibracte narrative and the Sabis River account.<sup>7</sup> Both of these use information to foreshadow danger and build tension, particularly in the reiteration and elaboration of threats.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, in the Belgic confrontation, stylistic choice dominates the narrative, as the creation of the topos of the multitude is a prime determinant of content, and is designed to emphasise the odds against the Roman commander.<sup>9</sup> This is a literary interpretation, illustrating that the narrative is fundamentally driven by the effect on the audience. The extent to which a passage can be influenced by the style adopted is evident in the Octodurus narrative. Free from the need to promote his own actions, Caesar constructs the entire battle narrative in order to capture the impressions of the characters and engage his audience in the unfolding drama of the confrontation.<sup>10</sup> Rather than simply recreate the course of events in the text, the perception of the participants is captured in order to create a vivid and engaging account. The military information revealed in the passage is not just included to reconstruct the historical confrontation, but is primarily addressed at the impression it has on the audience. Caesar's description of battle, in spite of an apparent simplicity, incorporates the details of combat and other contextual information with the effect on the audience as a predominant concern.

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<sup>6</sup> Gerlinger (2008) identifies some of these in the examination of realism in battle.

<sup>7</sup> 1.24-1.26, 2.17-2.28.

<sup>8</sup> Mannetter (1995) pp. 97-118. See also Grillo (2011) on the narrator and Kraus (2010).

<sup>9</sup> 2.1-2.12.

<sup>10</sup> 3.1-3.6.

## The Persuasive Role of Battle

Battle narrative is utilised for more than just engaging with the audience, and this study has illustrated the fundamentally persuasive role that these passages have throughout the text. Through a focus on case studies it has been shown that methods and objectives may change, but Caesar uses the content of battle narrative to influence and persuade his audience to understand the events and characters according to his interpretation.<sup>11</sup> Battle narratives are far from just a clarification of the historical events, and are not simply defined by military criteria such as a concern with explaining the result.<sup>12</sup> As demonstrated, the relationship between battle, the campaign, and the promotion of Caesar is inseparable, and each narrative is constructed according to discrete and highly specific criteria. Whether it is in the representation of groups, individuals, or more importantly Caesar himself, battle narrative is more persuasively forceful than a record a victory or defeat. The information by which battle is understood, and the minutiae of combat itself, serve a critical role in influencing the audience to accept Caesar's understanding of the events described.<sup>13</sup>

Chapters Two to Five examined different aspects of the persuasive element, such as the interpretation of an episode or characters, or the use of battle in the promotion of Caesar personally. Each chapter demonstrated that battle narratives use information to create or support an understanding of the campaign in which they appear, such as the battle against Ariovistus, where the issue of *virtus*, and which side is stronger is addressed in the content of the described confrontation.<sup>14</sup> This is not an isolated example, and all major, and most of the minor battles are driven by a fundamental desire to influence the audience to accept Caesar's perspective regarding the events

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<sup>11</sup> See Barthes (1970) p. 153 on meaning.

<sup>12</sup> For example Brown (2004) has an excellent example of battle narrative in use, in his analysis of the relationship between the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp at 5.38-5.51 and the massacre of the legion under Sabinus and Cotta at 5.26-5.37. This thesis illustrates that these accounts are not alone in their persuasive design, and that the content of every major battle has a role to play in generating or supporting an interpretation of the events described.

<sup>13</sup> Not all persuasive objectives have been addressed in this thesis. For example only the contrast of Caesar and Vercingetorix has been examined in the Alesia narrative. See pp. 268-276 above. Other possible objectives, such as the status of the battle as a closure to the *Bellum Gallicum*, or the broad historical justifications for the war, have not been included. Nevertheless the role of battle and Caesar's objective of self-promotion is clear.

<sup>14</sup> See pp. 146-161 above.

related. In some cases the objective is clear, such as the short account of the Tigurini, where the brief description of combat supports the clear concept that this is the enactment of both public and personal justice.<sup>15</sup> A longer account, such as the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta in Book Five also has a stated interpretation that informs the massacre itself, and continues to inform the later description of the defence of Quintus Cicero's camp.<sup>16</sup> Where there is no stated interpretation for the battle to support, Caesar nevertheless uses the details to create very specific impressions. This can be achieved through a brief account such as the massacre or the Usipetes and Tencteri, where the combat reiterates and resolves the dangers of these peoples, or the extended narratives of the Sabis River and Alesia, where self-promotion is a fundamental aspect of the narrative structure that underpins these accounts.<sup>17</sup>

The persuasive methods available to Caesar are numerous. In his description of the fighting in Britain, numbers are used to illustrate the ongoing threat that a particular enemy poses, and then a catalogue of tribes is used at the end of the account to illustrate the extent of their final defeat.<sup>18</sup> A more subtle use of numbers is the casualty report of the Nervii in Book Two, which establishes not only the extent of their courage, but by inference the greatness of Caesar in overcoming them.<sup>19</sup> Caesar also makes use of rhetorical *exempla* to support his understanding of an event. In the battle of Gergovia, *exempla* such as Marcus Petronius and Lucius Fabius, and anecdotes such as the Nitobrigian king and the women on the walls are all used to assign responsibility for the defeat to the army and to illustrate how the men lost control.<sup>20</sup> This method is seen throughout the work, most notably in the use of *Baculus* to represent the status of a legion and the need for Caesar's intervention, or the Tenth Legion as an *exemplum* of contempt for the reputation of the Germani.<sup>21</sup> Empirical data, and the minutiae of combat, in particular close combat, all function to influence the audience and support Caesar's interpretation of the events described,

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<sup>15</sup> 1.12.

<sup>16</sup> See pp. 209-213 and pp. 335-339.

<sup>17</sup> See pp. 297-319 on the Usipetes and Tencteri, pp. 222-238 on the Sabis River and pp. 264-276 on Alesia.

<sup>18</sup> 5.1-5.23.

<sup>19</sup> 2.28.

<sup>20</sup> 7.36-7.52.

<sup>21</sup> See 2.25, 1.40, 1.42.

supporting the concept that the construction of these passages is based on persuasion of the audience.

The battles often have a close textual tie to their relevant campaign narrative, and act in concert with the general text to create or support Caesar's interpretation of the episode. This is highly evident in the two battles examined in Chapter Two. The description of the naval battle against the Venetii, with its description of the *falx* as a countermeasure to Venetian naval superiority, addresses the challenge of resolving this campaign against a mobile and elusive opponent.<sup>22</sup> Caesar's concern to explain the difficulties he faced throughout the campaign is reflected in a battle narrative that addresses and then resolves the overall problematic nature of fighting these adversaries. Similarly a textual relationship governs the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani, as the role of the passage is to directly address and rebut the idea of Germanic prowess, raised both by the character Ariovistus, and by Caesar's character in the near mutiny at Vesontio.<sup>23</sup> This objective informs the construction of the battle, as is apparent in comparative references to *virtus* in the array of forces. Combat serves to demonstrate the superiority of the Romans in this quality, with a powerful description of courage by individual *milites* hurling themselves on the shields of the enemy that is a direct refutation of Ariovistus' boasts.<sup>24</sup> This highly vivid passage illustrates the role that battle plays in addressing and resolving the message regarding the Germanic reputation, and, as with other accounts examined in this chapter, the relationship with the overall episode guides construction of the narrative. The nature of the implementation may vary, but details of battle are used in conjunction with the overall passage to create or encourage an impression of the episode for the audience.

This is common throughout the work and the manner in which battle and the campaign narrative are interrelated demonstrates the persuasive dimension of these passages. The battle against the Belgic confederation in Book Two utilises the catalogue of enemy forces and the course of combat in conjunction to encourage the impression of a vast and disorganised entity, and to illustrate the disruptive nature of

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<sup>22</sup> 3.7-3.16.

<sup>23</sup> See 1.31-1.53.

<sup>24</sup> 1.52.3-1.52.6.



the horde.<sup>25</sup> Campaign and battle also function in conjunction in the account of the Nervii, where the reputation of the enemy is built up through the preceding passages in order to create a worthy enemy for Caesar to defeat in the battle.<sup>26</sup> This relationship is essential to an understanding of battle and is evident from the case studies that examine each battle in its campaign context.

More importantly, there is a relationship across the problematic campaigns of Book Four and Five that demonstrates the extent to which the content of battle has been selected to address Caesar's aims. The description of the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta has a substantial effect on campaigns described throughout the course of Book Five. The second British invasion therefore not only addresses the first expedition, but it is utilised to show a concern for Gaul, and to establish concepts of responsibility in order to establish Caesar's lack of culpability in the defeat.<sup>27</sup> The influence of the massacre is also apparent in the subsequent defence of Cicero's camp, where Caesar draws contrasts in behaviour to dissociate his own ideas of command from the conduct of the defeated officers.<sup>28</sup> The complexity of the relationship between episodes, and the manner in which a single major concern links together several campaign and battle narratives illustrates the comprehensive usage of the material of battle narrative, in this case to defend Caesar against possible criticism for the defeat.

Battle narrative also supports or creates impressions regarding characters other than Caesar, and this can be as simple as an introduction in the case of the Helvetii, where the Bibracte narrative in Book One is used to define Gallic warfare for the audience.<sup>29</sup> The vivid depiction of Helvetian courage, tenacity and intractability establishes behaviour by which to understand the enemy and the nature of warfare against them. Content is often selected to illustrate characteristics of the enemy, whether that is the barbaric auguries of the Germani, or the allusion to the warlike nature of the Britons in the description of their fortifications.<sup>30</sup> Even battlefield topography can be incorporated into an interpretative framework for the characters, as is evident in the siege of Aduatuca where physical features of the battle such as walls, and piles of

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<sup>25</sup> 2.1-2.12.

<sup>26</sup> 2.17-2.28.

<sup>27</sup> 5.1-5.22.

<sup>28</sup> 5.38-5.51. See also Brown (2004).

<sup>29</sup> 1.24-1.26.

<sup>30</sup> 1.50.4-1.50.5, 5.21.3-5.21.4.

surrendered arms, reflect the enemy's perception of superiority and the level of their duplicity.<sup>31</sup> Caesar selects his battlefield information for its relevance to his understanding of the enemy and how he wishes them to be interpreted, and the details are determined by the supportive role that they serve.

It is not just the representation of groups that has a fundamental effect on battle, and Chapter Three included an examination of information that is included to address issues of individual character. In particular, Caesar utilises some of the shorter narratives to praise subordinates such as Crassus and Labienus, whose contribution to victory forms the focus of campaigns when they are separated from their commander.<sup>32</sup> By contrast, one particular account, the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta, includes information to specifically show the flawed command characteristics of Sabinus.<sup>33</sup> This is the case throughout the work, such as the manner in which battle is used to dispel the boasts of Ariovistus, or to marginalise Vercingetorix and reduce him to a figure of defeat.<sup>34</sup> The presentation of this major character indicates that content is included as part of the representation of participants, and as with the other case studies illustrates that battle has a critical role in establishing a desired reception for these groups or individuals.

### **Caesar the Character and Battle**

Most of the efforts to influence the audience relate to the most important character of the *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar himself, and the critical factor in any consideration of battle narrative is the manner in which a passage promotes him, either as author or as the most prevalent figure of the work. Self-promotion is entirely unsurprising in this work; however the extent that this motive determines the presentation of military information is critical for an understanding of the battles of the *Bellum Gallicum*. At a simple level, Caesar engages with his audience through the creation of a compelling narrative, as is apparent in the dramatic defence of Octodurus, a passage that illustrates the importance to Caesar of a positive literary reception to the work as it

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<sup>31</sup> 2.29-2.33.

<sup>32</sup> 3.20-3.27, 5.56-5.58, 6.7-6.8.

<sup>33</sup> 5.26-5.37.

<sup>34</sup> See pp. 146-161 for Ariovistus, pp. 260-276 for Vercingetorix.

adopts the perspective of the participants rather than his own perception of the event.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, whether through a simple tale of shipwreck survivors in Book Four, or through the long and gripping tale of near defeat at the hands of the Nervii, Caesar's relationship with his audience and his apparent desire to create a favourable impression is a key determinant of battle.<sup>36</sup> Self-promotion is particularly evident in the battle of the Sabis River, where the narrative is structured towards a crisis point centred on his person, even though important elements for victory occur elsewhere on the battlefield.<sup>37</sup> Self-aggrandisement through the representation of Caesar the character is also evident in the topos of the Belgic horde, a literary interpretation of the battle that is not simply a reiteration of numbers, but draws attention to the scope of Caesar's victory.<sup>38</sup> Even where he is not present, such as the siege of Quintus Cicero, Caesar draws attention to his importance through the structure of the narrative that establishes his role as rescuer.<sup>39</sup> The construction of battle is consistently determined by the need to persuade the audience to view Caesar positively, both as author and character.

Battle also creates a favourable impression of Caesar as a great commander, through narratives that associate him with positive themes, ideas and characteristics. Battle does much more at a literary level to promote Caesar than to record the victories, as he positions his character on the battlefield to associate himself with thematic criteria, as seen in the battle against Ariovistus and the Germani, or to ensure his physical presence is associated with the thematic resolution of a campaign, as in the naval battle against the Venetii.<sup>40</sup> These battles have an essentially persuasive role in establishing the importance of Caesar; they associate him with the positive resolution of themes and enhance his importance as commander through association with key concepts in the confrontations described.

Where Caesar does not draw explicit attention to his presence, his objective in promoting command capabilities is nevertheless an important determinant for the construction of battle. Caesar utilises battle as a demonstration of particular qualities,

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<sup>35</sup> See pp. 88-111 above.

<sup>36</sup> See p. 290 on the shipwreck, pp. 222-238 on the Sabis River.

<sup>37</sup> 2.25.

<sup>38</sup> See p. 124.

<sup>39</sup> 5.38-5.51.

<sup>40</sup> 1.52.7-1.53.2, 3.14.8-3.14.9.

and the siege of Aduatuca makes constant references to his *clementia*.<sup>41</sup> Command qualities similarly have a strong presence in the first invasion of Britain, where the preparations, and the landings themselves, are designed to demonstrate his abilities as commander, and to associate his actions with the advancement of Roman interests.<sup>42</sup> His physical presence is limited in this account, but the construction of the battle adheres to the broad purpose of self-aggrandisement as it focuses on how obstacles are overcome through his responses to the challenges of the landing. The concern for his quality as commander is also evident in Book Seven, where the pairing of Caesar and Vercingetorix, and other contrasts in command, is highly influential in the descriptions of the campaigns fought.<sup>43</sup> Most importantly, the final confrontation at Alesia is a demonstration of his superiority to Vercingetorix and the other Gallic commanders.<sup>44</sup> However, command qualities can be put on display in a subtle manner using battle, and in the confrontation with Ariovistus, the complex interrelationship of negotiations, mutiny and finally battle all serve to ultimately prove Caesar's understanding of the enemy is correct.<sup>45</sup> As a display of qualities, battle supports the representation of Caesar as a great commander more thoroughly than as a record of victory, as it illustrates his command qualities through the details supplied.

Battle also serves to protect the reputation of Caesar as great commander, through the construction of passages that minimise any negative interpretation of problematic battles or campaigns. Caesar's apparent frankness in his description of the difficulties faced is superficial, rather the details of battle are used implicitly to support or defend his conduct. The description of the first invasion of Britain specifically includes the details of chariot combat to support his explanation for why he retired from the island and to highlight the unusual difficulties faced.<sup>46</sup> Battle narrative also serves to implicitly explain the course of events and dissociate Caesar from responsibility, as is evident in the siege of Avaricum, where the representation of the participants is critical to the explanation for the massacre.<sup>47</sup> The ferocity of the defence and the determination of the Romans are used to explain the slaughter as a natural result of

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<sup>41</sup> 2.29-2.33.

<sup>42</sup> 4.20-4.26.

<sup>43</sup> See 7.1-7.15, 7.16-7.28, 7.66-7.68.

<sup>44</sup> 7.69-7.89.

<sup>45</sup> See pp. 146-161.

<sup>46</sup> See 4.33.

<sup>47</sup> 7.16-7.28.

the circumstances. In a more direct instance of justification, the massacre of the Usipetes and Tencteri is part of a campaign structure where the necessity of eliminating this untrustworthy and dangerous threat to Gaul is established, then resolved through combat.<sup>48</sup> Within these battles and campaigns, the concerns of self-defence have a significant effect on the presentation of conflicts that pose particular problems for the commander and narrator of the work. Caesar displays considerable flexibility in his use of battle narrative; however there is a consistent self-conscious concern with his reputation as commander and the favourable interpretation of the conflicts described.

### **The Nature and Place of Caesar's Battle Narratives**

The role of battle throughout the *Bellum Gallicum* is essentially to provide supporting arguments for Caesar's interpretation of each episode, through a process of selection and emphasis of particular military details. To return to the example used in the introduction, the battle against the Usipetes and Tencteri, this account is a representative example of Caesar's technique and intent.<sup>49</sup> It seems likely that Caesar faced some criticism at Rome for his handling of the affair, in particular the breaking of a truce and the capture of legates, and the battle certainly appears as part of an explanatory passage regarding his conduct of the campaign.<sup>50</sup> In the account Caesar addresses the threat that the Usipetes and Tencteri posed to Gaul in order to show the necessity of his actions. He introduces the threat in the introductory passages before the battle, using background information to establish the scope of the danger that the enemy presented. The battle narrative itself supports this concept, and reminds the audience of this threat in the description of the cavalry attack against the women and young boys, specifically mentioning those who were a threat through their ability to procreate or due to their future potential. Numbers are cited in the battle in order to empirically assess the scope of the danger, and the narrative follows the ensuing rout to the Rhine in order to demonstrate the resolution of the strategic issue.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, a cavalry skirmish is included to evoke ideas of deceit and the danger of

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<sup>48</sup> 4.1-4.16.

<sup>49</sup> 4.1-15. See pp. 297-319 above.

<sup>50</sup> See pp. 297-298.

<sup>51</sup> 4.15.1-4.15.4.

the enemy cavalry, and to emphasise the punitive aspect of the massacre.<sup>52</sup> This matter of Germanic betrayal is then addressed through the description of Roman morale and the justified aggression of the soldiers, who storm the camp out of anger at the perfidy of the enemy.<sup>53</sup> This particular battle narrative includes information designed to justify Caesar's behaviour in breaking a truce and pre-emptively attacking the enemy. Such use of battle as part of a literary scheme or pattern is consistent across the accounts of the *Bellum Gallicum*. In line with the other case studies, this passage provides an understanding of the nature and purpose of battle narratives, as each has a powerful argumentative role in the creation of an impression, or the support of Caesar's interpretation of an episode.

This fundamentally persuasive role of battle narrative has implications when considering Caesar's place in the historical corpus. It is clear that his battle narratives are not just extended description of victories, to be read like the military manual of an author like Frontinus, whether for instruction or pleasure.<sup>54</sup> Rather, Caesar has the objective of attributing meaning to the events described; a style he shares with historians such as Livy who attributes meaning to battles such as the defeat at Trasimene, where he blames Flaminius.<sup>55</sup> However unlike some of his historical counterparts, Caesar seems less inclined to attempt clarification of the source event that he describes, as is evident in his highly selective inclusion of numbers.<sup>56</sup> Whereas Livy or Polybius at least attempt to provide clarification of the sides to a confrontation, Caesar largely includes numbers for their persuasive effectiveness, such as the precise cavalry casualties suffered in the cavalry skirmish against the Usipetes and Tencteri.<sup>57</sup> Whether it is a simple message of justice and necessity, as is the case in the battle against the Usipetes and Tencteri, or the extensive explanation of the difficult campaign against the Venetii, battles include content primarily to support and reinforce his understanding in a highly focussed manner.<sup>58</sup> Caesar is also motivated by the need to celebrate his achievements, and uses the material of battle to

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<sup>52</sup> 4.12, 4.14.5.

<sup>53</sup> 4.12, 4.14.3.

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 41-43.

<sup>55</sup> See Livy 22.4.4 for criticism of Flaminius' failure to reconnoitre. See also Livy 22.1.5-22.1.18, 22.3.7-22.3.13 for the religious failures of Flaminius.

<sup>56</sup> See pp. 45-53, 123-126 above.

<sup>57</sup> See pp. 48-51, 311 above.

<sup>58</sup> See pp. 297-319, 126-145 above.

promote the victories, illustrate his command qualities and forestall criticism. The interpretative framework therefore appears to be constructed with the same desire for celebration that Cicero sought for his own consulship.<sup>59</sup> The battles of the *Bellum Gallicum* contain elements of the historical, but are highly selective in both contextual material and the details of combat, both of which are placed in service to direct self-promotion.

The highly directed arguments and contentions of the battle narratives in the *Bellum Gallicum* make possible some tentative observations about the relationship between battle, literary techniques and rhetoric contained therein. Caesar recognises causally important features of the battlefield, such as the return of Labienus in the Sabis River account, however these elements do not form the framework of his narrative structure.<sup>60</sup> Instead, battle is part of an argument in support of an episode, whether that is implicit or openly stated. The case studies of this thesis have revealed the relationships that exist within each episode and the methods by which Caesar persuades his intended audience. His methods include techniques such as foreshadowing, secondary narrators, asyndeton and focalisation; features that are common across many accounts and that indicate he makes use of a variety of conventions.<sup>61</sup> Caesar consistently applies these literary techniques throughout battle narrative, for example using the subjective perception of the defenders in the Aduatuci account to highlight the arrogance of the enemy, or relegating Vercingetorix to the role of observer at the end of Alesia to establish his helplessness in defeat.<sup>62</sup> It may be beneficial to engage in further study of these techniques across the work, with particular consideration of Caesar's use of anecdote and *exemplum*, which seem close to the use of such figures in rhetoric, and synthesise this analysis with studies of the speeches. In particular, the use of the anecdotal figure of Baculus suggests that the rhetorical techniques on display are not just evident in speeches, and that the studies of scholars such as Nordling can also be applied to the course of battle descriptions.<sup>63</sup> Caesar appears to draw on various methodologies for his battles, illustrating the

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<sup>59</sup> See p. 17 fn. 49, p. 32 fn. 142, p. 43 above on Cicero's commentary.

<sup>60</sup> See pp. 237-238.

<sup>61</sup> On foreshadowing see pp. 67, 70-71, 119, 127, 154, 235 for examples. On secondary narrators see pp. 75, 151, 197. On asyndeton see pp. 79, 270. On focalisation see p. 88 fn. 270, p. 99 fn. 335.

<sup>62</sup> See pp. 185-186, 275-276.

<sup>63</sup> This would develop on the work of scholars such as Nordling (1991) and Gerlinger (2008) and follow in particular Kraus (2010). See above pp. 116-123 on *exempla*.

flexibility of his technique and the combination of different forms of persuasion. This thesis notes the possibility for a more robust understanding of Caesar and his style of argumentation, through further analysis of the methods used in the passages of the *Bellum Gallicum*.

Another important conclusion to be drawn from the use of battle narrative is the highly episodic nature of the *Bellum Gallicum*. Caesar does not appear to have a stated goal for battle at the start of the work, and simply defines the theatre of operations. This lack of a stated scheme is apparent as, with the exception of Book Five, where there is an extensive interrelationship between the campaign accounts, most battles are directed at an understanding of the individual confrontation narrated, or at the campaign in which the battle appears. The essential feature of Caesar's battles is that they seem to address short term textual objectives, such as the representation of enemies like Ariovistus and Vercingetorix.<sup>64</sup> As the account of the battle against Ariovistus illustrates, the content of the battle addresses the boasts of the enemy leader in the initial negotiations, and supports Caesar's opinion as stated in the Vesontio passage, demonstrating the close relationship of passages throughout the second half of Book One. Even complex battle narratives are primarily episodic, such as the Sabis River battle that builds the account around the *virtus* of the enemy, and that places Caesar's personal entry into battle against this enemy in a central position.<sup>65</sup> This does not preclude an overarching or unifying theme for the whole work, but it does appear that Caesar's objectives for battle narrative are highly localised in the text.<sup>66</sup> There is a close textual relationship between each battle and its attendant campaign, with highly visible objectives that are peculiar to each passage.

The episodic relationship between battle narratives and their campaigns has implications for the composition of the work. The absence of external evidence to conclusively date the *Bellum Gallicum* has left unresolved the question of when and how the work was composed.<sup>67</sup> The analysis provided in this thesis indicates that there is potential to better understand the manner of composition through an examination of battle and its relationship to the surrounding text. In particular, the

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<sup>64</sup> See pp. 146-161, 260-276.

<sup>65</sup> See pp. 66-71, 192-204, 222-238.

<sup>66</sup> Contrast Livy *Praef* 1 where an objective is stated for the whole work.

<sup>67</sup> See pp. 26-27 above.



complex relationship of the various campaigns of Book Five, in which responsibility for the massacre is defined in the second invasion of Britain, and then reinforced in the siege of Quintus Cicero, suggests a literary pattern that emphasises the book over the work as a whole.<sup>68</sup> This book shows a strong literary structure that suggests it may have been written to stand alone, the level of literary independence suggesting a periodic composition to the work.<sup>69</sup> While not conclusive, the structure of Book Five may have important implications for scholarship on composition, as it displays a coherent argument structure that is limited to the content of the book and the activity of that particular year.

Most importantly, this thesis provides improved qualifications to Caesar's concept of Roman warfare, an area of research that has thus far relied heavily on a literal interpretation of the text.<sup>70</sup> While military scholars have recognised the artifice of speeches, battle has sometimes been afforded an exceptional position as largely immune to the self-promotional dimension of the work.<sup>71</sup> In particular scholars such as Lendon and Kagan have attempted to explain Caesar's battles as driven by his understanding of warfare in the historical events described, but this thesis shows that these narratives serve a far more persuasive function. For example in the Sabis River narrative, two legions disappear from the narrative because Caesar concentrates on his own contribution and a tribute to his brave enemy, an omission Lendon attributes to the narrator's focus on the causal significance of *virtus*.<sup>72</sup> While Lendon is correct to note that *virtus* is causally important, as Caesar shows in other battles, it is not the reason that this battle narrative appears as it does.<sup>73</sup> This thesis demonstrates that a reconstructive view of battle may misconstrue the reasons the content exists, and lead to erroneous assumptions about Caesar's understanding of warfare. An acceptance that battle is carefully constructed for self-aggrandisement means that the reasons content appears can be correctly identified. This in turn creates opportunities for building a clearer picture of this commander's understanding of warfare.

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<sup>68</sup> See pp. 319-339.

<sup>69</sup> Note also that if the *exemplum* Baculus' early appearances could be shown to foreshadow his later roles, this alternatively might indicate unitary composition. See 2.25.1, 3.5.2-3.5.3 and 6.38.1 for his appearances.

<sup>70</sup> Wheeler (1998) and (2001) has noted the problems with the current use of sources such as Caesar.

<sup>71</sup> See above pp. 22-25.

<sup>72</sup> See above p. 202.

<sup>73</sup> See above pp. 43, 56, 192.

It is this persuasive objective that can actually provide some highly valuable insights into Roman warfare. The most obvious result of this thesis is an understanding of what Caesar regards as the desirable characteristics of a commander, and how such a commander functions in both victory and defeat. This is illustrated in the account of the landings in Britain, where it is more important to show how he overcomes the challenge, than to portray himself physically leading the landing.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, Caesar's representation of the massacre of Sabinus and Cotta illustrates that he has to show particular diligence in order to avoid censure for the defeat of the subordinates.<sup>75</sup> Overall, Caesar's attempts to convince his audience of his competence as commander lend a level of veracity to the military concepts contained within, as he appears to draw on preconceptions of command against which to rate his own performance.<sup>76</sup> While a level of caution is still required, Caesar's attempts to persuade his audience towards his interpretation of each passage are in themselves valuable in understanding what he considers are the important characteristics of a commander.

In particular, this literary study of battle has already yielded results in an analysis of Caesar's expectations regarding centurions.<sup>77</sup> A forthcoming article by this author is based on the study of *exempla* in the *Bellum Gallicum*, as it has been possible to define limits on centurion behaviour based on the literary context in which they appear. By first considering the motives behind the account, and the behavioural norms against which the centurions are assessed, it is possible to determine under what circumstances they were expected to enter personal combat or hold back and control the *milites*. This has implications not only for how centurions performed in combat, but on the behaviour of the cohorts overall. A detailed knowledge of persuasive role of battle narrative in the *Bellum Gallicum* enables a more exact understanding of Caesar's knowledge of warfare, through a balance of his authorial objectives against his military experience.<sup>78</sup> Once the desire for a literal interpretation

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<sup>74</sup> See pp. 254-260.

<sup>75</sup> See pp. 319-339.

<sup>76</sup> See for example the invasion of Britain pp. 251-253 above.

<sup>77</sup> This is addressed in a forthcoming article, D. Nolan, *Caesar's Exempla and the Role of Centurions in Battle*. The author is indebted Dr Jeremy Armstrong of Auckland University in this regard, for the opportunity to contribute to his book.

<sup>78</sup> This is the subject of a further examination regarding the siege of Quintus Cicero at 6.36-6.41 in Book Six. See Gerlinger (2008) p. 227. As Richter (1977) p. 164 notes regarding the use of Caesar "Sonach ist der Quellenwert des BG zwar in mancher Hinsicht begrenzt, jedoch innerhalb der

of battle has been dispensed with, there is scope for a much deeper understanding of Roman warfare as described by this highly successful commander.

### In Summation

As a window into Caesar's reasoning while composing the *Bellum Gallicum*, an analysis of battle narrative yields valuable results regarding his concerns as he constructed each section of the work. By analysing the elements of combat provided, including structural and stylistic considerations, within the context of the immediate text, the persuasive role of battle narrative is apparent, and a detailed understanding of Caesar's objectives is possible. The overall role that battle plays is evident in the persistence of textual relationships that are addressed at specific objectives throughout the work, as he reflected on his military achievements and used them for self-promotion through textual representation. It is not just through the military victories themselves that Caesar gained his formidable military and political reputation. Through the conflicts described in the *Bellum Gallicum* he was able to create meanings of his choice, and he used these narratives based on the wars in Gaul to advance his political career in Rome, and to help build a reputation as commander that persists to this day.

## APPENDIX A: TABLE OF BATTLES CITED

Battle/Campaign	Ref	Main Citations
Campaign against the Helvetii	1.4-1.29	pp. 49-50, 57-59, 170-177
Defence of the Rhone	1.8	pp. 47-48, 215-216
Defeat of the Ceutrones, Graioceli, Caturiges	1.10	p. 48 fn. 51
Defeat of the Tigurini	1.12	pp. 55-56, 113-116
Cavalry battle with the Helvetii	1.15	pp. 62 fn. 142, 178 fn. 98, 308 fn. 171.
Defeat of the Helvetii	1.24-1.29	pp. 48-49, 57-59, 170-177, 215-215
Campaign against Ariovistus and the Germani	1.31-1.53	pp. 50-51, 63-64, 146-161, 220-222
Germanic attack on a camp	1.50	pp. 167-168, 184
Defeat of Ariovistus and the Germani	1.51-53	pp. 50-51, 63-64, 146-161, 220-222
Confrontation with the Belgae	2.1-2.12	pp. 51-53, 56-57, 64, 71-88, 177-184, 194-198, 216
Defeat of Belgic states	2.13-2.15	pp. 51-52, 195
Defeat of the Nervii at the Sabis River	2.15-2.29	pp. 14, 45, 51, 66-71, 117, 166, 192-204, 222-238, 282-283
Siege of Aduatuca	2.29-2.33	pp. 54, 184-192, 243-245
Defence of Octodurus	3.1-3.6	pp. 54, 88-111, 117-118, 163-164, 170, 280-281
Campaign against the Venetii	3.7-3.16	pp. 126-145, 221-222
Sabinus and the Venelli	3.17-3.19	pp. 208 fn. 263, p. 209 fn. 268.
Crassus in Aquitania	3.20-27	pp. 205-206
Campaign against the Morini and Menapii	3.28	No battle fought
Campaign against the Usipetes and Tencteri	4.1-4.16	pp. 8, 55, 297-319, 349-350
First Rhine Crossing	4.17-4.19	No battle fought
First campaign in Britain	4.20-4.37	pp. 245-260, 254-260, 279-280

Beach landing in Britain	4.20-4.26	pp. 254-260
Chariot combat in Britain (first invasion)	4.32-4.34.	pp. 65, 286-288
Final battle in first invasion	4.35-4.36.	pp. 288-290
Morini attack on Roman cohorts	4.37	p. 290
Second Invasion of Britain and preparations	5.1-5.23	pp. 125-126, 319-335
Roman assault on river and wooded fortifications in Britain	5.9-5.10	p. 328
Chariot combat in Britain (second invasion)	5.15-17	pp. 331-335
Roman assault across fortified river in Britain	5.18	pp. 331-332
Roman assault on natural fortifications, a sortie and last battle in Britain	5.21-5.22	pp. 166-167
Defeat of Titurius Sabinus and Arunculeius Cotta	5.26-5.37	pp. 52-53, 209-213, 335-339
Defence of Quintus Cicero camp	5.38-5.51	pp. 239-243, 335-339
Labienus defeats Indutiomarus	5.56-5.58	pp. 169, 207-208
Campaign against Nervii, Senones, Carnutes, Menapii	6.2-6.6	No battle fought
Labienus defeats the Treveri	6.7-6.8	pp. 207-208
Second Rhine crossing	6.9-6.10, 6.29	No battle fought
Ambiorix escapes Basilus	6.30-6.31	pp. 205-206 fn. 244.
Campaign against the Eburones	6.32-6.36	Minor skirmishes
Quintus Cicero defence of Aduatuca	6.36-6.42	pp. 164-165, 209 fn. 268-269
Sack of Cenabum	7.3	No battle fought
Campaign against Vercingetorix	7.4-7.15	pp. 260-264
Siege of Vellaunodunum, Cenabum and Noviodunum	7.11-7.12	p. 263, fn. 263
Siege of Avaricum	7.16-7.28	pp. 165-166, 262-263, 291-297
Battle of Gergovia	7.36-7.52	pp. 116-123, 280

Slaughter of Romans at Noviodunum	7.55	No battle fought
Labienus against Camulogenus	7.57-7.62	p. 207 fn. 259
Cavalry battle prior to Alesia	7.66-7.68	pp. 268-269
Siege of Alesia	7.69-7.89	pp. 264-276

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